

**GENDER, MIGRATION AND RURAL LIVELIHOODS IN  
GHANA: A CASE OF THE HO DISTRICT**

**By**

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## **ABSTRACT**

This thesis seeks to examine the interrelationships between gender, migration and rural livelihoods in Ghana. The central argument of the study is that policy making on migration and livelihood, tends to ignore gender as a critical issue in development planning. The study suggests that effective development policy interventions should take into consideration the dynamics of gender relations because men and women experience migration differently. Employing primary and secondary data, the study demonstrates that when men and/or women migrate, there are consequences for households. For those migrating, this can result in either empowerment or increased vulnerability. And for the agricultural households in the sending areas, the departure of men and/or women affects their livelihood and division of labour. Our investigation shows that migrants are predominantly males, with a relatively smaller but increasing number of women. Drawing on earlier studies, the thesis argues for a more systematic examination of the consequences of migration on rural households, particularly on the economic livelihood and household responsibilities of women. By understanding the conditions of rural households, development practitioners are in a better position to design gender appropriate policies and projects. This approach will significantly improve the economic situation of rural communities and maximize their development dividends. The study has practical significance as it sheds light on the options faced by rural women, and the adjustments they make, when confronted with male out-migration.

## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this thesis to my children Lydia-Elim and Lynden Edem. Thank you for all your sacrifice and support.

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## **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

### **CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION: EXAMINING THE GENDER, MIGRATION AND LIVELIHOODS LINKAGE**

1.1	Introduction	2
1.2	Background Information	4
1.3	Introducing the Migration-Development Relationship	6
1.4	The Gender and Migration Linkage	12
1.5	Migration within the Ghanaian Context	18
1.6	The Study	20
1.7	The Goal and Objectives of the Study	24
1.8	The Research Methodology	26
1.9	Data Collection and Analysis	28
1.10	Identifying the Research Community	31
1.11	Conclusion	32
1.12	Organization of Chapters	33

### **CHAPTER 2: THE MIGRATION AND LIVELIHOODS DISCOURSE: IS THERE A GENDER ELEMENT?**

2.1	Introduction	43
2.2	An Introduction to the Migration Literature	46
2.3	Historical Perspectives of Migration in SSA	47
2.4	Migration in the West African Region	50
2.4.1	Colonial Interferences in West Africa	53
2.5	The Historical Trend of Migration in Ghana	53
2.5.1	Migration during the Pre-colonial Era	53
2.5.2	Migration during the Colonial Era	53
2.5.3	Post-Independence Era	58
2.5.3	Migration in the Contemporary Period	60
2.6	Migration in other Regions of SSA	63
2.6.1	Southern Africa	63
2.6.2	East Africa	64
2.7	Gender Analysis of Migration in SSA	66
2.8	Types and Trends in Global Migration	68
2.8.1	Rural-Urban Migration	69



2.8.2	Rural-Rural Migration	71
2.8.3	Urban-Urban Migration	72
2.8.4	Urban-Rural Migration	73
2.9	Overview of Determinants of Migration	75
2.9.1	Economic Determinants	75
2.9.2	Socio-Cultural Determinants	78
2.10	Introduction to the Livelihood Approach	80
2.11	The Sustainable Livelihood Framework	82
2.12	Migration as a Livelihood Strategy	85
2.13	Conclusion	89

### **CHAPTER 3: GENDER FRAMEWORK FOR ANALYZING MIGRATION AND LIVELIHOODS**

3.1	Introduction	91
3.2	Theoretical Approaches Underlying Migration	93
3.2.1	Dual Economy Models of Migration	94
3.2.2	Neoclassical Models of Migration	100
3.2.3	New Economics Models of Migration	104
3.3	Gender Gap in Traditional Migration Theories	107
3.4	The Emergence of Gender in Migration	108
3.5	Perspectives on Theories of Women in Development	113
3.5.1	Women in Development	115
3.5.2	Women and Development	117
3.5.3	Gender and Development	120
3.5.4	Gender Mainstreaming	124
3.6	Policy Approaches	126
3.6.1	Welfare Approach	128
3.6.2	Equity Approach	129
3.6.3	Anti-poverty Approach	131
3.6.4	Efficiency Approach	133
3.6.5	Empowerment Approach	134
3.7	Comparisons between WID and GAD Approaches	136
3.8	Feminist Perspectives on Migration and Livelihoods	137
3.8.1	Liberal Feminism	139
3.8.2	Radical Feminism	140
3.8.3	Socialist Feminism	141
3.8.4	Black Feminism	143
3.8.5	African Feminism	148
3.8.6	Application of African Feminism to the Ghanaian	

Context	152
3.9 Conclusion	154

## **CHAPTER 4: CONTEXTUAL AND METHODOLOGICAL ISSUES**

4.1 Introduction	155
4.2 Levels of Investigation	157
4.3 Selecting the Research Communities	158
4.4 Preparations for Research	160
4.5 Recruitment and training of Research Assistants	161
4.6 Process of Selecting Research Participants	163
4.7 Community Entry and Interaction	165
4.8 Administering the Research Instruments	172
4.8.1 Questionnaire Survey	173
4.8.2 Semi-Structured Interviews	175
4.8.3 Focus Group Discussions	180
4.8.4 Participant Observation	184
4.8.5 Personal Narratives	187
4.9 Data Processing and Analysis	188
4.10 Field Work Evaluation	190
4.11 Dissemination of Preliminary Research Findings	191
4.12 Challenges in the field	192
4.13 Ethical Considerations	196
4.14 Strengths and Limitations of Study	197
4.15 Conclusion	200

## **CHAPTER FIVE: GENDER RELATIONS AND FACTORS THAT IMPACT ON GHANAIAN WOMEN**

5.1 Introduction	201
5.2 Gender Relations in Pre-colonial Ghana	202
5.3 Gender Relations during the Colonial Period	203
5.4 Gender Relations in Contemporary Times	208
5.5 Factors that Impact on Ghanaian Women	210
5.5.1 Access to Education	210
5.5.2 Access to Health	211
5.5.3 The Legal System and Women	212

5.5.4	Women's Position in Marriage	213
5.5.5	Access to Credit	216
5.5.6	Women and Formal Employment	219
5.5.7	Women's Role in the Informal Sector	220
5.6	Land Tenure in sub-Saharan Africa	222
5.6.1	Land Tenure Rights of Women in Ghana	225
5.7	Women and Agriculture	229
5.8	The Household Economy and the Invisible Roles of Women	232
5.9	Conclusion	234

## **CHAPTER 6: ON THE SHORES OF THE ATLANTIC COAST OF WEST AFRICA**

6.1	Introduction	239
6.2	Brief Profile of the Volta Region	240
6.2.1	The Political History of Eweland	241
6.2.2	Socio-Cultural Overview of the Volta Region	243
6.3	The Ho District	245
6.3.1	Geography and Relief of the Ho district	246
6.3.2	Climate and Vegetation	246
6.3.3	Population	247
6.4	Ho the Double Capital Town	248
6.4.1	Local Government and Decision-Making	248
6.5	The Abutia Villages	252
6.5.1	Climate and Vegetation	253
6.5.2	Physical Location of the Abutia Villages	254
6.5.3	Abutia Settler Villages	257
6.6	The Migratory History of Abutia People	260
6.7	Agricultural Activities in Abutia	264
6.7.1	Livestock and Hunting	266
6.8	Political Organization	267
6.9	Rural Infrastructure in Abutia	269
6.9.1	Water Supply	269
6.9.2	Sanitation	271
6.9.3	Health Facilities	272
6.9.4	Educational Amenities	275
6.9.5	Transportation	279
6.9.6	Energy Supply	281

6.9.7	Telecommunication Services	282
6.9.8	Markets	284
6.9.9	Other Infrastructures	285
6.10	Infrastructure and Gender Relations	286
6.11	Conclusion	287

## **CHAPTER 7: CHARACTERISTICS OF HOUSEHOLDS AND RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS**

7.1	Introduction	289
7.2	The Household	290
7.2.1	Male-headed Households	292
7.2.2	Female-headed Households	294
7.3	Research Participants and Respondents	295
7.4	Education of Respondents	296
7.5	Religion of Households	299
7.6	Social Functions Most Attended	301
7.7	Gender Ideologies	302
7.8	Household Relations	304
7.9	Household Division of Labour	307
7.9.1	Division of labour on household farms	308
7.9.2	Division of Labour in the home	310
7.9.3	Division of labour in between Husband and Wife	312
7.10	Time Spent on Household Chores	314
7.11	Assistance with Household Responsibilities	317
7.12	Primary Occupation of Respondents	318
7.13	Secondary Occupation of Respondents	320
7.14	Household Income and Assets	323
7.15	Household Budgetary Contributions	326
7.16	Conclusion	331

## **CHAPTER 8: CHARACTERISTICS OF MIGRANTS**

8.1	Introduction	332
8.2	Household Migration Decision	333

8.3	Determinants of Migration from Abutia	335
8.3.1	Economic Determinants	336
8.3.2	Socio-Cultural Determinants	338
8.4	Types of Migration in Abutia	339
8.5	Demographic Characteristics of Migrants	342
8.5.1	Age of Migrants	343
8.5.2	Sex of Migrants	344
8.5.3	Education and Skills of Migrants	347
8.6	Position of Migrant in Household	349
8.7	Occupation of Migrants Prior to Migration	351
8.8	Occupation of Migrants at Destination	352
8.9	Migrant Contact with Household	356
8.10	Destination of Migrants	358
8.11	Abutia Migrants in Accra	360
8.11.1	Job-Seeking Migrants	362
8.11.2	Education Seeking Migrants	363
8.11.3	Migrants Moving for Family Reasons	364
8.12	Migrants' Contact with Families	365
8.13	Conclusion	366

## **CHAPTER 9: IMPLICATIONS OF MIGRATION FOR RURAL HOUSEHOLDS**

9.1	Introduction	367
9.2	Implications for Agriculture	369
9.3	Implications for Secondary Livelihoods	373
9.4	Remittance Behaviour of Migrants	377
9.5	Demographic Implications	383
9.6	Implications for Household Division of Labour	384
9.7	Effect on Household Decision-making	385
9.7.1	Traditional Values and Control	386
9.8	Effect on Family Support Systems	389
9.9	Implications for Marital Relations	390
9.10	Social Status of Households	391
9.11	Impact of Migration at Community Level	392
9.12	Implications for Community Development	394
9.13	Recommendation by City Members	397
9.14	Conclusion	400

## **CHAPTER 10**

10.1 Summary and Conclusion	402
10.2 Ideas for Further Research	408

BIBLIOGRAPHY	409
GLOSSARY	445
APPENDICES	463

## **LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS**

### **LIST OF MAPS**

Map 1.1: Position of Ghana in the West Africa Region	39
Map 1.2: Map of Ghana Highlighting the Volta Region	40
Map 1.3: Map of Ghana Indicating the Research District	41
Map 6.1 Administrative Regions of Ghana Showing the Volta Region	237
Map 6.2: Administrative Districts in the Volta Region	237
Map 6.3: Map of the Ho District showing the Abutia villages	238

### **LIST OF FIGURES**

Figure 7.1: Percentage of Respondents from each village	291
Figure 7.2: Educational Attainments of Respondents	299
Figure 7.3: Activities viewed as suitable for Household Members by sex	314
Figure 7.4: Primary Occupations of Households Surveyed	319
Figure 7.5: Average Income Earned from Economic Activities in 2004	324
Figure 7.6: Average Contributions to Household Income	328
Figure 8.1: Sex Composition of Migrants	345
Figure 8.2: Occupation of Migrants prior to Migration	351

Figure 8.3: Occupation of Migrants at Destination	354
Figure 8.4: Migrant Contact with Household	357
Figure 9.1: Percentage of Households receiving remittances	380

## LIST OF TABLES

Table 7.1	Age and Gender of Respondents	296
Table 8.1	Age of Migrants	344
Table 8.2	Regional Destination of Migrants	359

## LIST OF PLATES

Plate 4.1:	Training of Research Assistants	161
Plate 4.2:	Abutia Teti. A cross section of a women's meeting	165
Plate 4.3:	Abutia Agorve. Research Assistant administering a questionnaire survey to women as they prepared palm nuts for sale	173
Plate 4.4:	Research Assistant conducting in-depth interview Head of household a widow, assists with preparing harvested maize for storage	175
Plate 4.5:	Participants at Focus Group Discussions at Abutia Kloe (they are served refreshments such as Fanta and Coca Cola)	180
Plate 4.6:	A section of community members who participated in the Information Dissemination Meeting	190
Plate 6.1:	Principal researcher, one research assistant and community guide in Abutia Teti	252
Plate 6.2:	Meeting with a household in Kissiflui, one of the Abutia settler villages	259
Plate 6.3:	Water supply for Abutia Teti and Agorve	271
Plate 6.4:	Principal researcher poses after focus group discussion in Abutia Kloe	283
Plate 8.1:	A seasonal migrant returns home from Twifu-Prasu	341
Plate 9.1:	Asafo festival	397
Plate 9.2:	A group of community members in Abutia Kloe	399

## **ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS**

AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
CBOs	Community-based organizations
CDF	Comprehensive Development Framework
CG	Consultative Group
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
CPP	Convention Peoples Party
CWIG	Core Welfare Indicators Questionnaire
DA	District Assembly
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
DAWN	Development Alternatives with Women for a New Era
DCE	District Chief Executive
DFID	Department for International Development
DWM	31 <sup>st</sup> December Women's Movement
ECG	Electricity Corporation of Ghana
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
ERP	Economic Recovery Program
FAO	Food and Agricultural Organization
FGDs	Focus Group Discussions
FIDA	International Recovery Program
GAD	Gender and Development
GES	Ghana Education Service



GIPC	Ghana Investment Promotion Center
GNP	Gross National Product
GOG	Government of Ghana
GLSS	Ghana Living Standard Survey
GPRS	Ghana Poverty Reduction Strategy (Ghana's PRSP)
GSS	Ghana Statistical Service
GWSC	Ghana Water and Sewerage Corporation
HIPC	Highly Indebted Poor Countries
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
IMCPR	Inter-Ministerial Committee on Poverty Reduction
IMF	International Monetary Fund
INGO	International Non-Governmental Organization
ISSER	Institute for Statistical, Social and Economic Research
JSS	Junior Secondary School
MDAs	Ministries, Departments and Agencies
MoWA	Ministry of Women and Children's Affairs
MOH	Ministry of Health
MP	Member of Parliament
NCWD	National Council on Women and Development
NDC	National Democratic Congress
NDPC	National Development Planning Commission
NDPF	National Development Policy Framework
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization

NPC	National Planning Commission
NPP	New Patriotic Party (party in government since Dec. 2000)
NPRP	National Poverty Reduction Program
NSSD	National Strategies for Sustainable Development
OECD/DAC	Development Assistance Committee of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
PAMSCAD	Program of Action to Mitigate the Social Costs of Adjustment
PMMD	Programme Management and Monitoring Directorate
PMMU	Programme Monitoring and Management Unit
PNDC	Provisional National Defense Council
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
PPA	Participation Poverty Assessment
PRU	Poverty Reduction Unit
SAPs	Structural Adjustment Programs
SSS	Senior Secondary School
STD/STI	Sexually Transmitted Diseases/Infections
TBA	Traditional Birth Attendants
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNESCO	United Nations Education Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNIFEM	United Nations Development Fund for Women

UNFP	United Nation's Population Fund
UNFPA	United Nations Fund for Populations Activities
WB	World Bank
WAD	Women and Development
WID	Women in Development
WHO	World Health Organization
WFP	World Food Program

## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION: EXAMINING THE GENDER, MIGRATION AND LIVELIHOOD LINKAGE

On a hot, dusty harmattan afternoon in a small Ghanaian village, Selase Asempapa sat on the veranda floor with her two daughters and a younger son, sorting through the previous season's corn to be sent to the grinding mill. As she worked, Selase recounted how her life had changed since her husband left for Accra, the national capital, five years earlier. "Sometimes I think that life was a lot better when my husband lived with us in the village. During that time, I would go to the farm with him very early in the morning, come back in the afternoon and cook some rice and beans with gari<sup>1</sup> and stew, which I sold under that big tree you see over there. My older daughter usually took over the sales when she returned from school, and I would go home and prepare the evening meal.

The daily income was not a lot, but it was reasonable. At least I had some small money left over after taking out the money used in buying the food items. My work on the farm was for the family, but some of the money from the petty trading was for my own expenses, and also for the children, of course. My husband was not working and was unhappy. He was angry because there are no jobs in the village or even in Ho our big town.<sup>2</sup> My husband and the other men work hard on the farm, but the rain does not fall as much as it used to. So the harvest from the farm is not plenty for the family to store food for the dry season and also sell some in the market."

"After spending a long time in the village farming, many of the men, including my husband, decided to move to Accra. Since my husband left, I work longer hours on the farm; sometimes I do not get back early enough to cook my rice and beans for sale.<sup>3</sup> So I lose the additional money that I would have made from the sales. I still work hard on the farm. Actually, I work even harder now that it's me alone. I also take care of the few goats and chickens we have. In addition to this, I still take care of the household chores just as before - fetching firewood and

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<sup>1</sup> Gari is a dry staple food made from cassava root. It is ready to eat and could either be eaten as such or cooked and eaten with soup.

<sup>2</sup> Ho is the capital for the Volta region and the Ho district. It is however, a relatively small town with few employment opportunities.

<sup>3</sup> Women are more prominent in such survivalist enterprises. In Ghana, cooked food sellers, ice-cold water vendors, groundnut sellers and other individuals operating alone in their households or outside undertake these ventures in order to diversify their livelihoods. These enterprises usually require very low capital outlay and low skills.

water, cooking, cleaning the compound, caring for the children and sometimes other relatives.” She sighed and looked up at me. “It’s a lot of work isn’t it?” I nodded, and we sat in silence as she reflected on her life. Then she threw back her head and smiled “I have lost the only work that brought small but regular money to the family and made me feel good about myself. Although my husband tries to send us some money each month, this is not regular and it is never enough. The children are still young and can only help with small things. I feel like I am carrying all the burden of the family on my shoulder. Now I am the woman as well as the man in the house.”<sup>4</sup>

## 1.1 Introduction

One of the most significant demographic phenomena facing many developing countries is the shortage of agricultural labour and food insecurity, and conversely, the acceleration of population growth in urban areas, which is largely triggered by the incidence of rural-urban migration (Agesa, 2001).<sup>5</sup> In sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) migration is such a widespread phenomenon, that any study made on an urban area will invariably deal largely with a population which was not born there. Most of these people have migrated from other parts of the country, particularly rural areas. Current rates of urban population growth reach up to 6% in many African countries including Accra, Lagos and Nairobi (Dao, 2002). Migratory movements have multiplied greatly in recent years, as a result of improved transport and communications and an expansion in urban informal sector

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<sup>4</sup> Selase Asempapa is the wife of migrant who lives at Abutia Teti. She was interviewed as Key Informant through an In-depth interview on January 23, 2006. This narrative is representative of the experiences of women in migrant households in the Ho District, and may also represent the lived reality of most women in rural migrant households in sub-Saharan Africa.

<sup>5</sup> Migration is defined in this study as the process where an individual moves from one cultural setting to another for the purpose of settling down either temporarily or permanently, and usually earning a living.

employment in most SSA countries (Chant & Radcliff, 1992).

Migration is particularly important to Ghana because it is a country with a long tradition of population mobility and particularly high rates of rural-urban migration. In his study of migration in Ghana in 1969, Caldwell argued that moving from rural areas to towns has been an important part of the farm household's livelihood strategies for decades. Caldwell (1969) observed that to many Ghanaians, urban life represents new employment opportunities, the possibility of working indoors, modernity, and being less tied to family duties, which is different from the traditional rural life of mainly working on farms, coupled with enormous family responsibilities (Kasanga et al., 1988).

In SSA, most social roles and status are ascribed according to gender and age, and opportunities and constraints such as access to resources and the opportunity to migrate, are socially embedded. Migration decisions are, therefore, made within a context of socially recognized and mutually reinforcing expectations that reflect several dimensions of gender relations between individuals, within households and in societal institutions (Francis 2000). As a result the impact of migration on rural households tends to be systemic, with far-reaching implications for the economic livelihood and daily lives of rural women.<sup>6</sup> Murray (1981) contends that one important consequence of rural-urban migration on the household is that women are filling the roles of absent males, both within the household and in the community. Murray's arguments points to the fact that

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<sup>6</sup> Gender inequality in the society means women and men's experience of migration and livelihood is different such as Selase Asempapa, the interviewee cited in the opening paragraph.

conventional explanations of men's migration experience in many cases do not apply to women.

This study presents theoretical considerations showing that migration is a profoundly gendered process which has huge consequences for rural households, particularly women. Based on research conducted in the Ho district of Ghana from October 2005-March, 2006, the study examines the complex process of migration, and its implications for rural households, particularly women's reproductive responsibilities and economic livelihood. The "lived reality" of most women in the research communities is captured by the narrative at the beginning of the thesis.

## **1.2 Background Information**

Internal migration is attracting increasing attention among academics, researchers, development practitioners, and policy makers, many of who attribute the rapid growth of rural-urban migration in particular, to increasing unemployment and rural poverty in developing countries (Anarfi et al, 2001; Chant, 2002; UN, 2003; Zhao, 2003).<sup>7</sup> Afshar, (2003:15) contends that the inadequacy of agricultural incomes, lack of gainful employment, coupled with poverty in rural areas, have pushed many people out of their villages in search of better sources of livelihood in the urban centers. According to

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<sup>7</sup> I would like to point out here that I intend to use the term "developing countries" more rather than the term "third world." I see them to refer to the geographical space rather than the social and economic position occupied by countries in Africa, Latin America and Asia. In using such terms, I do not in any way subscribe to the view that such countries are inferior to Western or Eastern industrial countries.

Bryceson et al. (2000:34), most of these migrants do not possess relevant skills or education that would enable them secure employment in the formal sector.

To make matters worse, jobs in the formal sector of most developing countries, particularly sub-Saharan Africa, have been shrinking over the years due to structural adjustment policies (Adepoju, 1995b:147). This assertion is supported by a report by the ILO (1998/99:27), in which the organization argues that many unskilled young men continue to move into the cities, mainly because there are no alternative jobs in the rural areas. Bryceson, (1999:58) argues that when migrants arrive in the cities and do not find jobs in the public sector, they have no option but to settle for work in the informal sector in order to earn their livelihood. This situation is evidenced by the increasing number of hawkers and self-employed artisans on the streets of cities in SSA, such as Accra, Ghana.

A review of the literature shows that migrants are predominantly young males (Deshingkar & Grimm, 2005:72). However, there is a relatively smaller, but increasing number of women who are joining the migration trend (Chant & Radcliffe, 1992). The proportion of males or females in the migration pattern, however, varies according to region. For instance, while it is young male adults who predominantly migrate in sub-Saharan Africa, in the Philippines, it is mostly young females who migrate (Zhao, 2003). These women migrate as independent workers to urban centers to find work predominantly in the informal sector (ibid: 43).



The experiences that men and women have as migrants differ and most of the differences are due to the roles, behaviours, and relationships that the society assigns to, and expects from, a woman or a man both in the place of origin and destination (Oppong, 1983). Most women in developing countries face socio-economic constraints, as they lack access to financial and natural resources such as land and capital (Fernandez-Kelly, 1981:57). The lack of access to resources translates into the lack of better economic opportunities for women. This relatively weaker position of women results in a vulnerability, which is further impacted upon by rural-urban migration (Brydon, 1987; Chant, 2002).

### **1.3 Introducing the Migration - Development Relationship**

Migration, gender and rural livelihoods are one interrelated set of critical development concerns in the contemporary world. However, surprisingly, these three phenomena have not often been considered as interrelated in the literature (Adepoju, 1995; DFID, 2004:65). Social scientists, development practitioners, migration and poverty specialists, feminist researchers, and policymakers continue to work independently of each other, not comparing notes on the linkages among these three phenomena within the development discourse (Francis, 2000; Jerve, 2001:52; Hugo, 2003:71).<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Governments and development agencies also continue to work, while oblivious of what each does and seemingly unconcerned about prospects for collaborative ventures (IOM, 2003).

Additionally, since the 1990s, little empirical work has been undertaken on migration patterns in sub-Saharan Africa, despite the relevance of these patterns in understanding the pervasive nature of poverty on the continent (Chant & Radcliffe, 1992; UN, 1994:23). This lack of interconnection stems in part from the very wide scope of rural-urban interactions, and also from the fact that different aspects of this process are often examined in isolation (Adepoju, 2000). Some development agencies concerned with urban development tend to research rural-urban migration on its own merit and perceive the linkages to urban areas in negative terms (DFID, 2004:16). For example, rural-urban migration is still often seen primarily as the cause of uncontrolled urban growth, urban poverty and the creation of slums and anti-social behaviour. Rural development policies on the other hand blame rural-urban migration for agricultural labour shortages and food insecurity (Ellis, 1998:78). However, this dichotomy is often not explored. Obviously there exists a linkage between rural and urban development efforts.

Oucho (2000:36) argues that migration and livelihood need to occupy a central place in national as well as regional discourses in sub-Saharan Africa. The author adds that for much of SSA's rural population, farming is still the primary activity. As a result, changes in the scale and nature of rural-urban interactions have relevance for the livelihood of different groups. These changes are largely related to transformations in the agricultural sector, because a declining agricultural sector invariably serves as an important "push" for rural residents to migrate to the cities in search of employment (Bryceson, 1999).

The declining situation in the agricultural sector has been worsened by economic reforms in SSA (Brydon & Legge, 1993a). During the last two decades, Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs) and other economic liberalization policies instigated by the World Bank and other international donors have prioritized market forces, limited the role of the state, and spurred de-egrarianization throughout sub-Saharan Africa (World Bank, 1989:12).<sup>9</sup> These austerity measures wrought hardships by severely reducing public expenditures for social and development programs, which contributed to social and political destabilization (UNICEF, 1990; Clarke & Manuh, 1991).

Though appearing to be neutral, these macro-economic policies have different implications for each social group, based on class relations and gender (Tsikata, 1995). In Ghana, for instance, SAPs has had gender biases in its social impact by having the most negative impact on vulnerable groups, particularly the poor, which consists mainly of women and children (Clarke & Manuh, 1991). When the government cut back on public expenditures, this affected the provision of basic services to the rural poor, particularly women (Awumbila, 1997). In the area of work, there is evidence from case studies that more women than men have become unemployed (FAO/UNFPA, 1991; Brydon, 1999). The restructuring of state enterprises and its resultant job losses in the formal sector has also affected women-dominated sectors such as the service sectors (Awumbila, 1997:145).

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<sup>9</sup> For a discussion on Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs) in Ghana, see Konadu-Agyeman (ed) For a gender perspective see Brydon and Legge (1996).

The retrenchment of thousands from the public sector, coupled with declining real incomes had an immediate “domino” effect on the informal sector through an influx of numerous laid-off female workers. This has consequently resulted in the reduction in employment and earnings from the informal sector as well (Clarke & Manuh, 1991). Through SAPs, the government also cut subsidies to agricultural input, thereby resulting in high prices of agricultural products and lower markets. A subsequent effect was a decline in agricultural wages and an increase in rural unemployment, which has led to increased rural-urban migration (Golstein & Udry, 2002). Thus while gender inequality predates SAPs, their effects and the policy climate they create have led to an increased perpetuation of gender inequalities (Brydon, 1999).

As part of a retreat from the unbridled neo-liberalism of SAPs, a number of donor agencies have now adopted a “sustainable rural livelihood” (SRL) approach, which stresses rural risk management aimed at reducing vulnerability (Carney, 1999:14). The goal of the SRL is to help people develop resilience to external shocks and increase the overall sustainability of their livelihoods (ibid: 15). In the meantime, a seemingly irreversible trend of increased rural-urban migration had already been put in motion as a result of the adverse effects of the SAPs economic reform policies (Zachariah & Conde, 1981).<sup>10</sup>

It is clear that a thorough understanding of the interrelationship between migration and livelihood is essential in an era that is characterized by increasing human mobility (IOM,

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<sup>10</sup> A number of studies on Ghana’s Economic crisis, the ERP and SAPs are available. See Loxley (1988), World Bank (1991) and Brydon and Legge (1996) for an analytical gender perspective on the issues.

2003:45-49). This knowledge is particularly important because migration as a livelihood strategy is much more common than is often assumed, and has been throughout history.<sup>11</sup> According to the United Nations estimates, by 2025, over 1.1 billion urban people in developing countries will be rural migrants (UN, 2003). It is also estimated that today more than 130 million people live outside the country of their birth, a number estimated to be growing at a rate of 2% per year (World Bank, 2000). Migration is, therefore, universally acknowledged as one of the most important sustainable livelihood strategies adopted by individuals, households or communities to enhance their economic capacity (Anarfi, 1989; Guest, 2003).

Clearly, the socio-economic and demographic ramifications of this increasing rural-urban migration will have a marked impact, not only on urban, but particularly on rural areas (Lipton, 1980; Weeks, 1989). The importance of the impact emerges not only from the movement of people between places, but also from its influence on the lives of individuals, households and infrastructures (Afshar, 2003). As a result of its tremendous potential impact on countries, migration has been recognized across the demographic field as an important development phenomenon in its own right, which requires detailed investigation (Chant & Radcliffe, 1992; Adepaju, 2000).

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<sup>11</sup> For example, research suggests that during the 1930s as many as two-thirds of peasants in northern Vietnam moved around in search of work during part of the year (Dang et al. 2003). In the words of Mansell Prothero, migration movements “have been a feature of Africa in the past and are one of its most important demographical features in the present day” (Anarfi, 1982). International migration within West Africa, and between the region and the rest of the continent, dates back to time immemorial (Arhin, 1978). The trans-Saharan caravan routes are among the earliest evidence of major interaction between West and North Africa for trading and exchange of scholars (Boahen, 1966).

It is apparent that migration is radically changing the socio-economic, demographic and development profile of developing countries, with far-reaching implications for agriculturally-based economies such as Ghana (FAO, 1994:35). With increased transnational capital movements and the globalization of trade in goods and services, people can be expected to move within a country, and also across national boundaries with greater frequency than ever before, in what has been described as the “age of migration” (Oucho & Gould, 1993:162). There is, therefore, a need for more research to enable policy makers and other stakeholders gain more insight into these phenomena.

One of the enduring features of demographic studies, however, is that the migration process has been, and still remains, the less researched component of population dynamics (Guest, 2003). In the 1980s, researchers such as Lauby & Stark (1988:46) pointed out the inadequacies of existing migration research, particularly on SSA, by contrasting the growing volume of migrants with their lack of representation in the literature.<sup>12</sup> Migrants, therefore, tend to remain invisible and are not reached by policy due to the lack or inadequacy of official data (Findlay & Williams, 1990:56). Although accurate figures on migration in SSA remain elusive mainly because it is often informal and undocumented, the indications are that this is on the increase with little prospects for its abatement or reversal (Oucho, 1998). The phenomena must, therefore, be accepted and factored into development planning (Tacoli, 2002; IOM 2003; Yang, 2004).

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<sup>12</sup> Several studies were later undertaken that investigated migration from developing countries, but most of these studies tend to focus on international migration (Anarfi et al., 2003; Potts, 2004). The limited literature on internal migration was also centred on urban areas, neglecting the sending rural communities, and making migration as urbanization issue.

## 1.4 The Gender and Migration Linkage

Prior to the mid 1980s, migration was regarded as a male phenomenon (Sjaastad, 1962; Lee, 1969; Todaro, 1977; Lipton, 1980). Authors such as Stouffer (1976) and Oberai, (1983) assert that until most recently, the physical movement of people from one place to another for employment was predominantly undertaken by men. The Todaro (1969) and Harris-Todaro (1970) models, which are some of the earliest models of migration, also emphasize that internal migration occurs in a dual economy, in which the urban sector draws male labour force from the rural sector. Meanwhile, other aspects of rural-urban linkages such as the gendered traditional division of labour and farm and non-farm employment have often been overlooked (Roca, 1994:102).

Migration was being seen by some researchers and scholars as gender-neutral because it deals with the process of *movement* of persons (Anarfi, 1982; Sabot, 1988).<sup>13</sup> Meanwhile, migration is actually gender-structured because men and women migrate for different reasons, use different channels and most importantly, migration has different consequences for men and women in both sending and receiving communities (Chant & Radcliffe, 1992; Silberschmidt, 1999; Potts, 2000). For those leaving, internal migration can result in either empowerment or, on the contrary, increased vulnerability and even victimization (FAO/UNFPA, 1991:23). Likewise, for those remaining, the departure of men and/or women from the household will have a specific influence depending on the

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<sup>13</sup> Earlier analyses of migration were rooted in economic theory (Todaro, 1976) focusing on the rational behaviour of individuals. Many attempts to explain the migration phenomenon have centred on theories of overpopulation, land shortage, taxation, and “bright lights”, which compelled people from rural areas to migrate to urban centres in search of wage labour (Todaro, 1976).

migrant's status and role within the household prior to migrating, such as being main wage earner, spouse, parent or young daughter or son (Fadoyomi, 1980).

For a rural farming household, in particular, the consequences of migration depends on the socio-cultural and economic context, gender and age of migrant, position of migrant within the household, the agro-ecological environment, the type of migratory movement, whether it is temporary or permanent, and the employment possibilities and self-sufficiency of migrant, and the ability to send adequate remittances to maintain the level of farming prior to migration (Andersson, 2002:78-79). One of the major implications of rural-urban migration is that it is the most able-bodied, relatively young and educated persons that migrate from rural to urban areas. This process, therefore, leaves behind rural communities composed of women, children, the elderly and uneducated, who are faced with the tremendous challenge of sustaining their household livelihood and the rural economy effectively (Findlay & Williams, 1990:65; Anh, 2003:79).<sup>14</sup>

The predominantly male out-migration from rural areas may also bring about changes in the agricultural gender division of labour, as the migration process will invariably increase women's workload on the farm, thereby resulting in the "feminization of agriculture" (FAO, 1995; Deshingkar & Start, 2003:99).<sup>15</sup> The out-migration of men

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<sup>14</sup>The position of the migrant within the household determines the amount of help he or she provides prior to migration. An adult daughter might have been helping with farm and household chores, whilst an adult male may have been doing the difficult tasks of the farm. Their migration means the woman has to work harder and longer hours both on the farm and in the house. The migration of a spouse and head of family unit affect decision making. The Abutia situation is discussed in chapter 8.



may also affect the cultural norms hitherto adhered to in the household, either to the women's benefit or detriment (Francis, 2000:76). It may be that the women left behind may gain a greater role in household decision-making, greater interdependence with the extended family, or gain more financial or social autonomy through the absence of men (Weeks, 1989). However, they may also be left with greater constraint and anxiety through patriarchal controls and vulnerabilities, less autonomy, less decision-making power, and an increased workload (Brydon & Chant, 1989). In situations where for instance, remittances are sent to female spouses, this may increase their decision-making and economic status and thereby reduce their socio-economic responsibilities. However, this may not occur in cases where household finances are handled by male relatives, for instance, when remittances are sent through the migrant's father or brother. In such cases, male relatives retain control over finances and the woman, by determining the use of remittances.

It can be seen from this discussion that there are a host of seemingly unimportant linkages between gender, migration and rural livelihood (Zachariah & Conde, 1981; Weeks, 1989). These interconnections, however, remain relatively unobserved, and need to be explored in greater detail (Findley & Sow, 1998). These gendered differentials, are continually being ignored in some of the literature, as equal attention is still not given to women and men within the migration discourse (Nabila, 1986).<sup>16</sup> For example, women

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<sup>15</sup> In many parts of the world today there is an increasing trend towards what has been termed the 'feminization of agriculture'. As men's participation in agriculture declines, the role of women in agricultural production becomes ever more dominant (FAO, 1995:23).

<sup>16</sup> Kabeer (1994) has developed a social relations analytical framework as a basis for promoting gender transformational policies in developing countries. Some of the ideas of the framework are incorporated in the thesis.

are still not perceived as equal actors in migration, and neither are they perceived as equally important in being surveyed and counted (Zachariah & Conde, 1981).

The neglect of the gender dimensions of migration is also reflected in data collection and analysis (Chant, 2002a; Deshingkar, 2005:32). For example, statistical information on rural-urban migration by gender is often not available and data on female-headed farm households is limited (Deshingkar & Grimm, 2005). According to Chant & Radcliffe (1992), the information on female-headed households has focused mainly on the head of households per se, rather than on the female-headed household unit.

Ignoring the importance of gender in the migration and livelihood discourse has important implications for policy, whose effectiveness relies on the appropriate identification of the needs and priorities of different groups (Bridge, 1994). This situation demands redressing, particularly because migration and rural livelihood exhibit varied faces, are caused by a variety of factors, and precipitate diverse consequences, which are underpinned by gender relations within each society (Afshar, 2003:91). A comprehensive analysis of migration and livelihoods along gender lines will bring to bear the fact that there are differences, sometimes significant, in the ways in which women and men can benefit from new opportunities, or, indeed, suffer from economic constraints, which are further compounded by the consequences of migration (Brydon, 1997a).

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To develop the argument that the gender dimensions of migration must be reflected both in policy formulation and data collection and analysis, the dissertation draws on the work of Diane Elson (1991), a leading scholar in the gender and economic policy field. In their theoretical formulation, migration policies contain what Diane Elson has termed a “male bias” (Elson, 1991).<sup>17</sup> Male bias and gender blindness also persist in agriculture, which is the main source of livelihood for rural areas. For instance, farmers are still generally perceived as “male” by policy-makers, development planners and agricultural service deliverers. As a result women find it more difficult than men to gain access to valuable resources such as land, credit and other agricultural inputs, technology, extension, training and services that would enhance their productive capacity (Harteveld, 2004).

Studies by FAO demonstrates that while women in most developing countries are the mainstay of agricultural sectors (and day-to-day family subsistence), they have been the last to benefit from, or in some cases, have been negatively affected by prevailing economic growth and development processes (FAO, 2000:23).<sup>18</sup> The lack of available gender disaggregated data, for instance, means that women’s contribution to agriculture in particular, is poorly understood, and their specific needs are ignored in development planning and practice (Fortes, 1971:45). Thus despite the fact that women are the world’s principal food producers and providers, they remain “invisible” partners in development (FAO/UNFPA, 1991:56).

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<sup>17</sup> Male bias” can be understood as an orientation which tends to work to the benefit of men. See. Elson (1995:3).

<sup>18</sup> See Little (1994) for a discussion on how gender affects the planning process.

Several contemporary feminist scholars and researchers have pointed out the inadequacies of existing research by asserting that in spite of the growing volume of writings on migration, there is a lack of gender representation in the literature (Brydon & Chant, 1989; Francis, 2000; Afshar, 2003). These scholars, and others, have focused on both the positive and negative consequences that women experience from migration, and have proposed an alternative approach for analyzing migration and women's livelihood strategies (Smith-Loving & McPherson, 1994; Whitehead, 1996). Using a perspective that challenges narrow, conventional definitions of gender, they have argued for a more systematic examination of the determinants and consequences of male and female migration, which are different in many respects from each other (ibid).

What is needed, Whitehead (1996) argues, is a more systematic gender-based analysis of migration because the effectiveness of policy interventions hinges critically on an understanding of the dynamics of gender relations at the household, community and national levels.<sup>19</sup> The goal of this study, therefore, is to explore these linkages, and to

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<sup>19</sup> Gender-based analysis is an integrated and systematic process of research and analysis that takes both men and women into account using a variety of quantitative and qualitative data. The GBA framework recognizes that the differences between men and women are influenced by a variety of factors, including class, socio-economic status, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, race, ethnicity, geographic location, education and physical and mental ability.

investigate the implications of rural-urban migration for rural households, particularly on the reproductive and productive lives of women left behind in households in the migration sending communities of Abutia in the Volta region of Ghana. The dissertation, however, acknowledges that poor women are not passive victims of development policies. On the contrary, they are active participants in the social, economic, cultural and to a lesser extent, political processes (Silberschmidt, 1991). In the face of economic hardship, poor women throughout the developing world have mobilized to defend their own livelihood and that of their families and households.<sup>20</sup>

## **1.5 Migration within the Ghanaian Context**

Recent studies on migration in Ghana have focused more attention on international migration than the movement within the country, even though the latter remains significant, and is almost certainly more important for equitable development (Anarfi, 1989). As a result of this orientation, policy formulation in response to migration is overwhelmingly skewed towards international migration, with a large emphasis on the benefit of remittances for the economy (Billsborrow, 1992; Anarfi et al. 2001:11). The rather limited literature available on migration within Ghana also tends to concentrate on

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<sup>20</sup> For example, rural women in Ghana who do not have access to capital, form *susu* savings groups, which enables them to save enough money to start petty trading to supplement their agricultural income (Bukh, 1979).

urban destinations and urbanization issues, with inadequate attention being paid to the sending areas (Brown, 1986; Andersson, 2001).

Lastly, and of most relevance to this study, is the fact that development planning and practice pay little attention to the influence of migration on rural livelihood, and continually ignore social relationships, particularly those of gender in policy formulation, poverty reduction strategies and rural development (Nabila, 1986; Bridge, 1994).<sup>21</sup> Unraveling the complex socio-economic and cultural contexts within which the migratory process occurs in Ghanaian reveals the role of gender and household organization as a central feature of rural-urban migration (Francis, 1995; DFID, 2004). Thus gender lens, through which any policy towards migration should be seen, is completely absent in the policy discourse on migration in Ghana (Ofei-Aboagye, 2001:19).

In Ghana, male out-migration is more predominant than female migration in most parts of the country, a situation that is attributable to the “breadwinner” concept (Bukh, 1979). Therefore, the point that needs exploring within the Ghanaian context is whether the situation in other parts of the country is the same in the study areas, and to identify the specific effects of migration on rural women who are already faced with the lack and/or limited access to resources.<sup>22</sup> This investigation is important because in considering the

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<sup>21</sup> Gender permeates all facets of our lives, making the need for gender based analysis go beyond those policies that are specifically targeted at women. Policies related to migration, rural development, health, finance, the environment, or even transportation all have the potential to either perpetuate gender-based inequities or to alleviate them in some way.

<sup>22</sup> The “breadwinner” concept refers to the household-based masculine responsibilities or obligations of men to care for their household dependants materially and mentally. This meant that men need to earn enough money and support their families’ domestic needs and govern their progress. While men feel the pressure of upholding their obligations, they could not have achieved it without the efforts of women. Men

rate of urbanization in Ghana, it is obvious that the observed trend in rural-urban migration is likely to continue in the foreseeable future (Oucho & Gould, 1993). As such, an awareness of the gendered nature of migration is imperative for policy formulation and development practice (Potts, 1997; Chant, 2002).

By considering the socio-cultural, economic and political context within which migration occurs in Ghana, we gain a deeper understanding of the historical and contemporary migration patterns and policies, but more specifically, who migrates, the reasons for migration, the migration decision-making process, and the implications of migration for rural households, especially women. Migrants are part of larger economies, such as communities, regions and nations, and the economic interfaces within these larger spheres affect migration beyond just the households that send out migrants. Hence an understanding of the gender underpinnings of the migration process is vital to the analysis of migration and rural livelihood at all these levels.

## **1.6 The Study**

This study is based on six months of ethnographic field research conducted between October 2005 and March 2006, which investigated the determinants or motivations as well as the implications of rural-urban migration for households in rural sending areas.

With a focus on the Abutia communities in the Ho district of Ghana, the study examined

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are also finding it more difficult to uphold this responsibility in the face of changing socio-economic conditions.

key factors that motivate migration from the district to other parts of the country, and how the migration patterns are changing the socio-cultural dynamics, economic livelihood, and the demographic and development profiles of these communities. In particular, the study analyzed the gender dimensions of migration by examining ways in which rural women's economic livelihood, reproductive responsibilities as well as their social position within the household and community, are affected by migration.

A number of researches have been conducted on different aspects of migration, and it is relevant to look at a select number of these studies. Some researchers have sometimes concentrated their study on particular towns, for example Busia's (1950) study of Sekondi-Takoradi, Skinner's (1974) study of Ouagadougou. Others have looked at particular districts within an urban area, such as Ross's (1975) study of two neighbourhoods in Nairobi. Another approach has been to look at a particular ethnic group within a city, such as Cohen's (1969) study of a Hausa community in Ibadan. Some researchers have looked at particular aspects of life in the urban areas. Little (1965) wrote about the voluntary associations that have developed in the urban areas of West Africa. Oppong (1974) studied marriage and family life among the elite in Ghana.

Most of the research conducted on migration in Ghana has focused on urban areas. Hence, although many of these studies have taken notice of the migrant background, they are all essentially studies of the migrant within his urban environment. Other researchers headed out to the rural areas. However, most rural studies have looked at the migrant and migration from within limited boundaries of the rural communities. Few studies have



included both migrants and villagers within the context of the same research design. Researchers such as Gugler (1965) and Caldwell (1969) have conducted their research in both rural and urban areas, but neither of them focused entirely on the gendered aspects of migration in rural sending areas. Both researchers interviewed rural and urban respondents, but neither attempted to draw a sample in which migrants and non-migrants belonged to the same household or village community.

There is also little comparable information on the gendered differences of migration in any of these researches. Relatively recent researchers such as Murray (1981), Brydon and Chant (1992), Potts (2000) and Francis (2001) have also researched aspects of migration and gender within various socio-cultural contexts. However, a wide gap remains in the literature available on gender and migration and rural livelihood.

A few researchers have looked at particular aspects of migration in the Ho district. However, these studies were conducted about two decades ago, in the 1970s and 1980s. Patricia Kaufert (1976) studied the relationship between migrants and their village kin in the Ewe community of Tsito.<sup>23</sup> The studies discussed the villagers' explanation of migration and their reaction to the problems associated with it. However, although the study presents some aspects of its data and findings on women, gender was not the central focus of her research. Jette Bukh (1979) conducted research on the socio-economic history of the same village. The emphasis of her study was on the changes in

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<sup>23</sup> Tsito is about five miles away from the Abutia villages in which our research was conducted. It is located along the Accra-Ho road, and is the largest of a group of villages which make up the state of Awudome in the Volta region.

division of labour and the role that women fulfilled in subsistence production, with minimal mention of migration.

In studies conducted in Avatime during 1977-1985, Lynne Brydon (1987) discussed some of the ideological presumptions long associated with women's migration. Additionally, the author briefly discussed problems in studies of migration and the consequences of skilled worker movement. She suggested that women tend to fill a much narrower range of jobs than do men, and that financial problems in urban areas, the facts of maternity and non-marriage, have brought about significant changes in both population and traditional residential group structures in the rural areas within the Ho district (Brydon, 1992).<sup>24</sup>

In another study at Tsito in 1996, Brydon revealed a gradual increase of women migrating independently of men. However, she does not undertake a comprehensive analysis of the gendered experience of migration for both men and women. However, since the location of Tsito is relatively close to Abutia, the study will utilize data from Brydon's study for comparative analysis, where applicable. These previous studies will therefore, serve as a point of reference for the Abutia findings, if applicable.

A book by Michel Verdon (1986) entitled *The Abutia Ewes of West Africa*, based on research the author conducted in the Abutia villages, is the only publication available on

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<sup>24</sup> Migrants in urban areas do not experience family and cultural controls as much as people living in rural areas. As a result of this relative freedom, those in the urban areas may prefer to cohabit rather than marry, and may also choose to delay marriage.

the Abutia communities.<sup>25</sup> The study of Verdon, however, principally examined the social organization of the Abutia villages since migration was not the focus of his study. In essence, there is no published research available, which examines the relationship between gender, migration and rural livelihoods in the Abutia villages, thereby leaving a gap which this research intends to fill. The study will draw on some secondary data from Verdon's findings to provide background information, bearing in mind, any changes that might have occurred between 1986 when his book was published, and now.

This dissertation is based on a research that explored the present situation of rural-urban migration in Ghana. The findings of the research represent the perspective of the people from the Abutia villages. It illustrates gender equity issues which have to be taken into account when formulating policies for migration and rural livelihood (Anh, Tacoli & Thanh, 2003). The study then builds on the argument that migration decisions are made within a context of socially recognized and mutually reinforcing expectations that reflect several dimensions of gender relations in the society (Nabila, 1986:57; Chant, 1992).

## **1.7 The Goal and Objectives of the Study**

The overall objective of the research is to investigate the interrelationship between gender, migration and rural livelihood.<sup>26</sup> More specifically, the study seeks to understand

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<sup>25</sup> I had conducted desktop research as well as personal library research in the UK, Canada and Ghanaian university libraries on materials pertaining to Abutia but found nothing besides Michel Verdon's study.

<sup>26</sup> In Ghana, some villages have their names prefixed with the name of the traditional area, accompanied by the specific name of the village. For example, Abutia Teti, Abutia Agorve and Abutia Kloe mean that these

the consequences of rural-urban migration on the economic livelihood and reproductive lives of women in the Abutia communities. A key objective of the study, therefore, is to collect and analyze the socio-economic and demographic data in order to understand the societal gender ideology, gender roles and division of labour within households. In working towards the key aims and objectives, the study also investigates the migration decision-making process and other relevant decision-making within the household. Additionally the study examines the determinants of migration, profile of migrants, rural-urban linkages and remittance behaviour of migrants, as well as other data that are pertinent to achieving the objective of the research.

Some of the questions that the study attempts to answer are: who moves from the villages and what are the motivations for such movements? What are the gender differential impacts of rural-urban migration on rural households and rural livelihood? Does rural-urban migration enhance or hamper the economic livelihood of households, especially women? Has it increased or decreased the household responsibilities of women, and how do women cope with these contested roles? While exploring the above questions, the study also bears in mind the importance of considering demographic and gender variables in migration and development in Ghana. And lastly the study draws a conclusion and explores areas for future research. The study is intended to make a contribution to the presently small, but growing research area of gender, migration and rural livelihood, by providing further insight into the interconnection between the three phenomena (Mabogunje, 1989; Sahn & Stiffel, 1989).

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three villages, although separate, are under the same traditional area and paramouncy. These are the only indigenous Abutia villages, although there are other settler villages. See map on the Ho District.

## 1.8 The Research Methodology

Any researcher setting out to investigate any new field must make a series of decisions. In most cases, the very first decision that a researcher must make in deciding to carry out a piece of research is the choice between qualitative and quantitative methodologies (Palys, 1992). The choice between these two research methods is important because they reflect entirely different underlying epistemologies and research philosophies.

The crux of the matter is not about superiority of one methodological approach over the other, but rather the identification of the approach that is most appropriate for a particular study. Given the overall objectives of this study, which is to deepen the understanding of the factors that underlie people's perceptions of rural-urban migration and livelihood, taking a strictly passive position would not have been useful. Rather than pretending to be "objective" researchers set at zero, the study had to employ a research method that would allow us to dialogue effectively with research participants (Maguire, 1987).

For the purposes of this study, we employed qualitative methods as the main research methodology, and this was supplemented by basic quantitative methods. Patton (2002) defines qualitative methodology as a naturalistic approach that seeks to understand phenomena in context-specific settings, such as a "real world setting where the researcher does not attempt to manipulate the phenomenon of interest" (Patton, 2002:94). Qualitative research techniques, therefore, are essential in exploring peoples' values, beliefs, attitudes and behaviours. It is particularly important when dealing with sensitive topics, and the approach also provides a great insight and understanding of people's lived realities, through dialogue between the researcher and the respondent (Maguire, 1987).

Quantitative research on the other hand, can be broadly defined as, any kind of research method that produces findings through statistical procedures or other means of quantification (Ibid: 95).

The strengths of qualitative research methods is derived primarily from its inductive approach, its focus on specific situations or people, and its emphasis on words rather than numbers (Patton, 2002). It is used to reflect on, and interpret the understandings, and shared meanings of people's everyday social worlds and realities. Qualitative methodology, therefore, seeks subjective understanding of social realities, whilst quantitative methodology on the other hand, provides statistical description and prediction (Maguire, 1987). When used together, these two methodologies tend to complement each other.

There are many valid reasons why I combined both qualitative and quantitative methodology in this research. One reason was my preference and experience as the principal researcher. Another reason and more valid one for choosing qualitative methods is the nature of the research problem and research questions, which in the case of this study, is an attempt to understand the gendered experiences of migration on rural households. Therefore, in considering these reasons, qualitative methodology is more appropriate. Patton (2002:37) emphasizes that quantitative and qualitative methods are not simply different ways of doing the same thing. The author argues that, instead, they have different strengths and logics, and are often best used to address different angles of questions and serve different purposes. Thus these two methodologies completed each other through triangulation, and thereby enriched the research results.

## 1.9 Data Collection and Analysis

The research was carried out by a team of three, consisting of myself as the principal researcher, and two research assistants who are postgraduate students in sociology at the University of Ghana, Legon.<sup>27</sup> These students have the same ethnic background, and speak the same language as the respondents, and also have research experience in the Ho district.<sup>28</sup> We conducted the research among 107 households in the three Abutia villages of Teti, Agorve and Kloe in the Ho district. Nearly all respondents were subsistence farmers who have relatively low levels of education. They were the heads of households in the villages. These people were, therefore, not the typical key informants, like government workers and NGO personnel who are relative “outsiders,” and whose perceptions are often influenced by “Western” thinking (Oakley & Mardsen, 1984).

We collected primary data which consisted of demographic and socio-economic information on households surveyed in the three Abutia villages. Data was also collected on the indicators of poverty, which include access to resources and basic infrastructure. A combination of instruments was used to collect information. These consisted of participatory methods such as semi structured in-depth interviews, focus group discussions (FGDs), participant observation and questionnaire survey (Maguire, 1987:121). The questionnaire survey was used mainly to collect numerical data about households that have been affected by rural-urban migration, and also to quantify some of

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<sup>27</sup> These students were at the thesis writing stage in the programme and, therefore were able to take time off and assist with my research.

<sup>28</sup> The research team was assisted by a community guide, who was a well-respected leader in the three villages.

the issues of the research. The survey questionnaire had 70 questions, which invited information on household demographic data, gender ideology and division of labour. The questionnaire also had open-ended questions whereby respondents were asked to express their opinions about the causes of migration from the villages, and its consequences on individuals, households and at the community level.

We used in-depth interviews to learn about individual and household migration histories, with a focus on intra-household negotiations and decision-making (Gadzar, 2003). Additionally, the interviews sought more detailed information from household members on gender relations and the effect of rural-urban migration on the household. Focus group discussions were organized in each of the three communities to determine the extent to which people felt migration had brought changes in their lives (Yang, 2004:76; Bilsborrow, 1992:81). These local experiences were transposed on a wider national context so that the research findings could be understood better.

We analyzed all the initial qualitative data manually. This process consisted of the research team reviewing the data, identifying key ideas of our research questions and relating them to the objectives of the study. I further explored themes and organized the findings in a manner that helped to examine linkages between gender, migration and rural livelihood of women in Abutia. Lastly, I undertook the final editing of the data and analysed it using Microsoft windows Excel.



The study also utilized secondary data through an extensive review of literature in order to provide a foundation on which the field work data was built. The information was collected from books, academic works and articles, journals and reports produced by individual authors, NGOs. Other sources included government reports on topics such as migration, livelihood, gender and development that were found in the Carleton University library, University of Birmingham library, as well as on the Internet. I also borrowed books from family and friends. For the historical part, I used archival colonial documents from the National Archives in Accra, Ghana, as well as old books from some researchers in Ghana. I found primary sources of information from the colonial period such as correspondences of the traditional authorities with colonial officials and letters of colonial administrators.

Other sources of information include documents at University of Ghana, Legon, other Ghanaian educational institutions and organizations, offices of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), World Health Organization (WHO) and the World Bank. Other documents are development plans, Ghana government census data, and research materials on rural-urban migration in Ghana and other developing countries.

Lessons have been drawn from these studies and the relevant findings are presented throughout the dissertation. The study has endeavoured to use the work of researchers and scholars from both North and South in the thesis in order to present as balanced perspective of researchers from the two hemispheres. I am a Ghanaian scholar in the

Diaspora. As a result, this thesis is marked not only by reference to academic scholars and their works, but also by the research traditions and discourses of gender and development, as well as by my own pre-existing understanding and values. These have been shaped by my specific cultural and contextual background, as well as my personal experiences in Ghana, Canada and the United Kingdom.

### **1.10 Identifying the Research Community**

The Volta region was considered suitable for the research because people from the region are known for their elaborate migration history. Voltarians<sup>29</sup> have a historical reputation dating back to colonial times, of being one of the labour reserves of Ghana (Brydon, 1987).<sup>30</sup> The factors that account for migration from the region in contemporary times, however, are more varied. This can be attributed to the erratic rainfall pattern, low agricultural productivity and low income, unemployment, lack of jobs, poverty, and the general lack of basic infrastructure and resources. This deprivation motivates the majority of people to migrate from the region in search of employment, while others migrate in order to pursue higher education in other parts of the country.<sup>31</sup> Taking into account the high but undocumented level of migration from the Volta region, it was considered a suitable region for research on rural-urban migration in the country. The Ho

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<sup>29</sup> Term coined by the author referring to people from the Volta region.

<sup>30</sup> Other regions that served as labour reserves for the colonial government are the Northern and Upper regions of Ghana. It is said that one can find people from the Volta region in every village and city in Ghana. See detailed discussion of topic in chapter 2.

<sup>31</sup> Migration into the district on the other hand is very minimal as those who move there are usually in formal employment, and on transfer from other parts of the country.

district was selected within the Volta region because it has a large population of migrant households, is central in location, and is relatively more easily accessible.

Within the district, the Abutia villages of Teti, Agorve and Kloe were chosen as the location for fieldwork. These villages were chosen because they have the requisite characteristics that make them appropriate for the research. First of all, the combined population of the three Abutia villages provided a relatively large population size for the research. More importantly, however, is the fact that the villages have long established rural-urban migration patterns spanning two to three generations in some households. This situation is evidenced by the large Abutia migrant association in Accra and other parts of the country. Lastly, although the villages are isolated from other villages in the district, they are relatively easily accessible from Sokode-Gbogame, which is about 12 miles on the main Ho-Accra road.

### **1.11 Conclusion**

This chapter has endeavoured to provide a background for the analysis of gender, migration and rural livelihood in Ghana. There are clearly many issues arising out of the discussions on the phenomena, but the most important argument is that development planning and practice continually ignores social relationships, including those of gender (Kabeer, 1991b). The discussions further shows how this neglect limits the extent to which national policies can lead to meaningful improvement in women's lives and wellbeing, and the transformation of social inequities including those of gender relations

(Ardayfio-Schandorf, 1993:173). Specifically, it is argued that gender, is perhaps the most important form of social differentiation that influences migration and rural livelihood (Kaufert, 1976; Manuh, 1992). The study uses some of these ideas to critique what may be flawed assumptions associated with migration and rural development in Ghana, by specifically analyzing how migration influences the livelihood of women and men in sending rural areas. (Amanor, 2001:86).

Finally, the chapter proposes that if we are to understand rural men and women's experiences of migration, then we need to interrogate the way migration is influenced by gender relations (Brydon & Chant, 1992). The study insists that only an approach that begins from an understanding of gender relations and their resultant inequities, can lead the way to addressing the impact of migration on rural households and women's productive and unproductive roles, and to promoting gender-sensitive policies and socio-economic development in Ghana (Chao, 1999). This study, therefore, contributes to an understanding of Ghanaian rural women's experience of migration within the historical, socio-economic and political context of the country.

## **ORGANIZATION OF THE STUDY CHAPTERS**

This thesis is organized in ten chapters closely linked to its research objectives. The dissertation starts with **Chapter 1** which presents the background introduction to the dissertation and then discusses key research issues and questions, as well as the study goal and objectives. The chapter points out the lack of gender in the literature and gender

blind assumptions made by policy makers and migration outcomes for households in sending areas.

**Chapter 2** presents a review of the existing literature on migration in developing countries. The chapter starts with a discussion of the historical pattern of migration in West Africa, with a focus on Ghana. I then move on to present a brief overview of migration in the rest of sub-Saharan Africa. This is followed by a discussion of the types of migration and the different regions in which they predominate, as well as the determinants or motivations. Lastly, the chapter presents the sustainable livelihood approach and explores the use of migration as a livelihood strategy.

**Chapter 3** presents a discussion of classical or traditional migration theories that are relevant to this study, and highlights the lack of gender in these theories. I further discuss the emergence of gender in migration research, and later present the main strands of the feminist theories and their relevance to the African context. The chapter contends that these approaches are used because of their importance to particular views about the development process, which are usually not beneficial to African countries. The chapter then underscores the relevance of the gender analysis, and sums up the main perspectives of women in development and policy approaches that are useful in capturing the essential issues of the relationship between gender, migration and rural livelihood in the Ghanaian context.

**Chapter 4** presents the methodological approach and looks at the sources of data, fieldwork evaluation strategy, the techniques and procedures of data collection and analysis. Starting with basic socio-economic background information about the study location, the chapter dwells on the process of defining and operationalizing the interrelationships between the methodological and contextual issues of the study, as a means of developing the relevant tools for collecting information. These include an understanding of the context of the study; deciding on the sources of data and justification for whatever choices are made; developing testing and refining the study instruments to ensure that questions posed address gender concerns; explaining the procedures used in analyzing the field data and the ethical challenges of the research process; and how the researcher came to terms with them.

**Chapter 5** discusses the historical evolution of the status of Ghanaian women in the society, their access to resources and factors that have affected their position in the society. This chapter provides an insight into how the socio-economic status of women has changed over time. Additionally, it discusses the constraints and challenges that confront Ghanaian women, especially those in rural areas. This discussion provides an understanding of the lived reality of rural women, and how their situation is impacted by rural-urban migration.

**Chapter 6** sets out an overview of the study area with a brief geographical and socio-economic description of the Volta region followed by an overview of the Ho district and the Abutia villages. The chapter contains a brief description of the history, social

structure, and socio-economic context within which migration occurs in the research communities. This background information provides a back-drop that enables the reader to understand why migration from these communities occurs, and the consequences of migration on households and women's livelihood.

**Chapter 7** speaks to one of the objectives of the study by examining the background information of households surveyed and research participants. Three important issues; socio-economic data, gender ideologies and socialization processes, division of labour within the household and other relevant demographic data of households surveyed are discussed thoroughly.

**Chapter 8** analyzes the empirical results of the field research on migrants and the migration experience, and their relevance to the migration literature. The chapter examines the determinants and motivations of migration from the communities, the migration decision, migrant's linkage with his/her household and community. The chapter also discusses the main livelihood of people in the rural areas of Abutia, and the occupational of households and of migrants before and after migration.

**Chapter 9** analyzes the consequences of rural-urban migration on household livelihood, daily responsibilities, and decision-making, with a focus on the productive and reproductive roles of women in households surveyed in the Abutia communities. The effect on main livelihood outcomes, including agriculture and secondary livelihood such as petty trading, migrant remittances, increased/decreased access to income and assets,

and overall well-being of the households surveyed are analyzed and explained. Drawing on the field data, the chapter analyzes the specific ways in which migration has interacted with gender relations at all levels to affect women and men differently. We drew on the views of both women and men in the research communities to establish similarities and differences in perception in order to present a balanced view of issues.

**Chapter 10** presents the summary and conclusion of the dissertation. The final chapter synthesizes the key issues emerging out of the discussion, summarizes the major findings and draws some conclusions. The position of the chapter is that the importance of integrating gender concerns into development practice in Ghana cannot be overemphasized. The challenge, however, is how to establish the required strategic institutional and policy frameworks to ensure that there is real social change in the lives of women and men in the sending rural communities. Lastly the chapter suggests areas for further research.



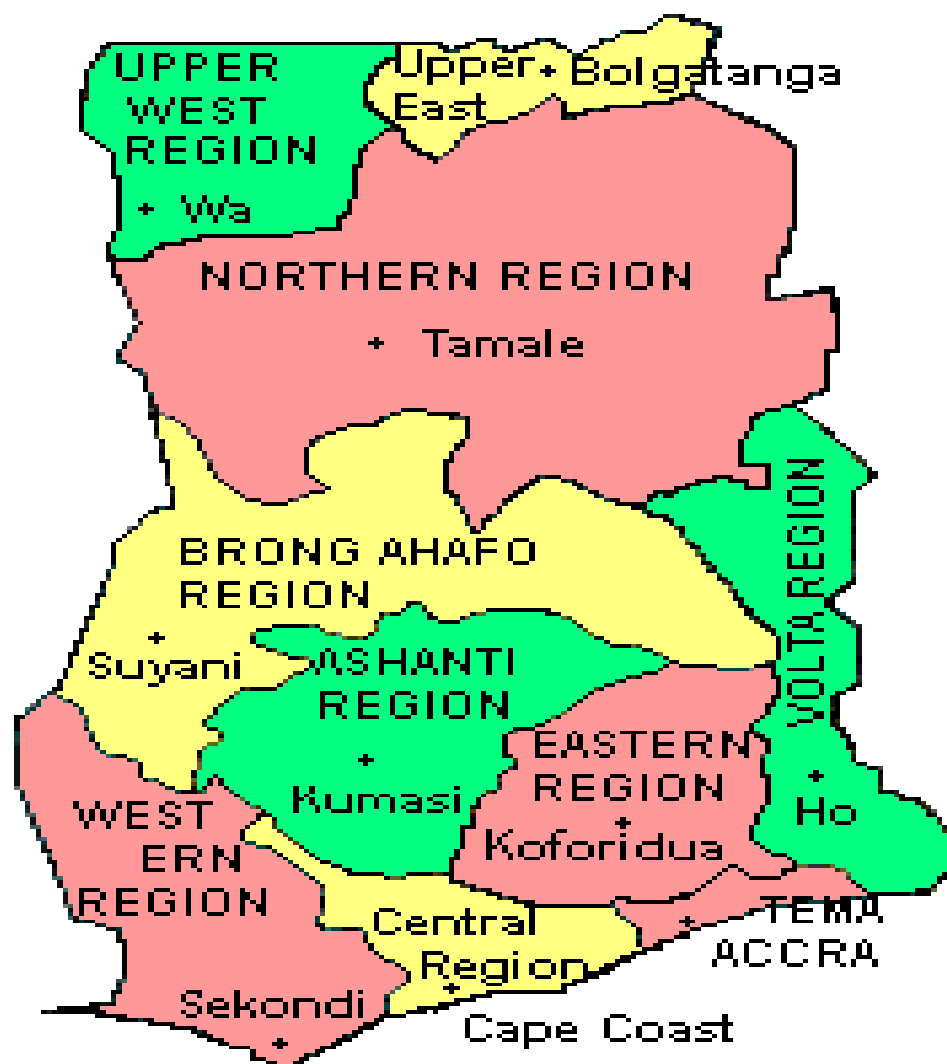
## Key Concepts

It is important to define some key concepts that have been used in this study in order to clarify the context within which they are being used in this study. These key concepts are defined in the glossary, which is attached to the back of the dissertation as an appendix.

**MAP 1:1      POSITION OF GHANA WITHIN THE WEST  
AFRICAN REGION**



**MAP 1:2     MAP OF GHANA HIGHLIGHTING THE  
VOLTA REGION**



**MAP 1.3      MAP OF GHANA INDICATING THE RESEARCH  
DISTRICT – HO DISTRICT**



## CHAPTER 2

### THE MIGRATION AND LIVELIHODS DISCOURSE: IS THERE A GENDER ELEMENT?

“There are no jobs in the village and we do not have money. We are just struggling from day to day. Aahh, because there are no jobs, most of our young men and sometimes some women too, but mostly the young men, have to travel to the big cities like Accra to look for jobs. When they leave, somebody has to do the work in the family. And who do you think does the work? Who is left to do it? The work burden falls on us the women. Some of our people are able to go to “higher schools” and find good jobs in the cities. Some, like one of my sons, work for themselves as carpenters and mechanics, others open kiosks where they work and also sleep, and others, like my niece, collect items from suppliers and sell them on the street. These ones are able to make some small money. They send some of the money to help us their families in the village. My husband is also one of them. He works as security guard for a company so they pay him monthly. From this he pays his expenses in the city and sends something for me and the children. One of my sons is an apprentice mechanic but gets some money from his job so he is able to buy a few things for himself.

A few of the young men who go to the cities end up on the streets doing bad things. We hear stories that some do not even have a place to “lay their heads” but they do not want to come back to the village because they will be laughed at as being lazy. Other young men are unfortunate and become sick, and are brought back here to the village. When this happens, they become the burden of the women in the family. The man’s wife, mother, sister or daughter has to take care of him. Even though we are poor we cannot leave a family member on the street. People will not respect your family if you do that. You bring the person home and take care of him. “If you eat stone he will also eat stone.” Yes that is how it is in the village. So what am I saying? What I am saying is that when our people leave the village it is good in many ways, but sometimes it is bad, especially for the women because we have to work even harder than before.....”<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> Ms. Eva Ofori was interviewed as Key Informant at Abutia Kloe on December 14th, 2005. Both her husband and eldest son have migrated to Accra. Her husband works as security guard whilst her son is an

## 2.1 Introduction

Let us imagine ourselves in the residential compound of Eva Ofori in Abutia Kloe in rural Ghana.<sup>33</sup> It is late afternoon and members of the household have returned home after a long day's work on the farm. The women set down their firewood and farm products, and prepare to cook the evening meal. Some of the children are sent to walk around the village to sell some foodstuff such as yam, palm nuts and okra that were brought from the farm. The sale of these farm products will provide some income which will enable the women buy fish, salt and other non-farm items. The other children are sent to the only borehole on the outskirts of the village to fetch water.

The men in the household sit under the tree on the compound to rest and wait for their evening meal. During this time, they talk about how much things have changed in the

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apprentice mechanic. Her nephew who worked in Kumasi fell sick and was brought to the family home in Abutia where he was being cared for by the women in the household.

<sup>33</sup>Eva Ofori is the interviewee whose story is told in the quotation at the beginning of the chapter.

village. Papa Kodzo, the 63 year old head of household, remembers when the rains used to come more regularly and the farm harvest was more plentiful. He says that during “the good old days” there was a lot more food to eat and surplus to sell, and so they made more money out of farming. Things have however, changed over the years. Papa Kodzo complains that the rains do not come regularly anymore, and the harvest is poor, and so the men are forced to leave for the cities, especially Accra, the national capital, to look for jobs.

Johnny, Papa Kodzo’s young nephew reminded them that not all the young men and women had left for the cities. Papa Kodzo chuckles and replied that it will not be long before he (Johnny) also follows the others to the big city. Efo Kwame<sup>34</sup> talked about men from the village like his younger brother, Sedem, who travel to more fertile rural areas like Ashanti Kpoeta to work on the cocoa farms and return in due time to work on his own farms. Sedem argued that this type of migration was better because men like his brother did not stay away permanently from the village.

EfoYaw, a neighbour, mentioned the names of a few households from which people have migrated to urban areas. According to this narrator, the migrants left because of poor rural infrastructure, citing reasons such as poor water and sanitation, and terrible road networks. Efo Kwame, a cousin of Papa Kodzo, remembers the son of the Headmaster of the Secondary Technical School, who is said to have traveled “across the oceans” to

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<sup>34</sup> “Efo” is a title of respect used for every adult male. It means big brother. However, the person does not need to be a blood relative.

continue his education. As they reflect on the movement of people from the village, Papa Kodzo consoles himself by reminding the others of people like Mr. Agyeman, a retired education officer at Kloe, who has returned home to settle after many years of working as a director with the Ministry of Education.

These discussions in Eva Ofori's compound provide an insight into the different patterns of migration that occur in the Abutia villages. The types of migration evident from the dialogue include rural-urban, rural-rural and urban-rural migration.<sup>35</sup> The discussions also show clearly that migration is one of the attempts that most villagers make to diversify their livelihood in the face of declining agricultural incomes (Adepoju, 1987:63). It is also apparent that women are invisible from these household discussions and that their opinions are not sought. This seemingly unimportant observation actually provides an insight into gender relations within the Abutia community. This is relevant with regards to migration since it is clear from the quote at the beginning of the chapter that migration touches the lives of women.

This chapter now examines relevant literature on migration and livelihood that are pertinent to the study. Drawing on a range of literature from around the world, I provide a historical analysis of migration in SSA with a focus on West Africa, the discussion then moves on to briefly discuss the patterns of migration in other regions of the world (Potts, 2004: 152; Beauchemin et al., 2004:17-21). This review is meant to enable the reader

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<sup>35</sup>The most predominant types of migration are rural-urban and seasonal rural-rural. These are discussed in greater detail in chapter 7.



put contemporary migration trends in Ghana into a wider perspective. I then proceed to discuss briefly the types of migration. Furthermore, I examine the livelihood approach and how migration has been conceptualized as a livelihood strategy (Beneria & Fieldman, 1992:49). The review pays special attention to a number of studies that have used multidisciplinary approaches, as these are better at capturing movements that seem to characterize much of migration today (Tacoli, 2002:13; Todaro, 1969:49; Lee, 1966:72). A fresh review of the literature on rural-urban migration is timely because of the rapidly changing economic, social and natural resource context faced by some of the world's poor households (Fortes, 2004:18; Zhao, 2003).

## **2.2 An Introduction to the Migration Literature**

Migration is one of the major components of population change, and has been an integral part of livelihood diversification across many developing countries for at least the last century (Agesa & Agesa, 1999:12). However, over time, and in different places, it has taken a number of different forms. This process has included internal, regional and international movements, exists in widely different demographic contexts and cuts across class and skill boundaries, and (Drinkwater & Rusinow, 1999:5; Dang et al, 2003:14).<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> Migration is generally defined as the spatial mobility of people between one geographical location and another, generally involving a change of residence from a place of origin to a place of destination. It is a difficult concept to define because it includes people who move for different reasons across different spaces. A migrant can be a person who moves to another city or town within a nation; a refugee who crosses an international border to escape religious or political persecution; a jobseeker who moves to another country for better economic opportunity.

With a few exceptions, evidence in the literature suggests that internal population movements are increasing. For example, close to 120 million people in China were estimated to have migrated internally in 2001, against 458,000 people migrating internationally for work (Zhao, 2003). Again in China, rural-urban migration has overtaken other kinds of movements in recent years as a result of increased manufacturing industries (Zhao, 2003). In Bangladesh two-thirds of all migration is from rural to urban areas and is increasing rapidly (Afshar, 2003). Rural-urban migration is also an important source of livelihood diversification in SSA, to which the study now turns (Bryceson et al., 2003).

### **2.3 Historical Perspective of Migration in sub-Saharan Africa**

Early writers had the impression that migration began in many SSA countries as a result of colonial policies and practices. This simplistic view ignored the socio-political environment that existed on the continent prior to colonization (Boahen, 1966:13). Today, however, it is increasingly accepted that in order to deeply understand migration in SSA, it is important to position the phenomenon correctly within the relevant anthropological context in which it originated (Adepoju, 2000:35).

In the words of Mansell Prothero, migration movements “have been a feature of Africa in the past and are one of its most important demographical features in the present day” (Anarfi, 1989). Past migratory movements in SSA took different forms and directions and were triggered by a variety of factors. Trade and agricultural practices of extensive

land use and shifting cultivation are cited as some of the factors that motivated migration during the pre-colonial era (Adepoju, 1984). Agriculture in SSA has long been characterized by slash-and burn systems wherein farmers use long periods of fallowing to restore soil fertility. Facing declining land productivity, farmers adjusted to the situation by expanding cultivation into marginal land and colonizing new forest areas, giving rise to the shifting cultivation practice (Mwabu & Thorbecke, 2001). Ibn Batuta, writing in the fifteenth century, and Leo Africanus, writing later in the sixteenth century, both made mention of the peaceful movement of people across ethnic boundaries in SSA (Batuta 1929, Africanus, 1896 cited in Anarfi 1989).

A qualifying note is in order here, that the notion of “internal” migration as it exists today is not a fitting concept for migratory movements during historical times (Anarfi et al., 2001). The reason is that the borders of today’s countries often cut across original abodes and paths traversed by ethnic groups. This is particularly true of Africa (the Fulani of West Africa, the Sotho in South Africa, the Ewe between Ghana and Togo, Mandingo throughout West Africa) and also South Asia (Punjabis, Bengalis) and Europe (ethnic Hungarians spread across Slovakia and Romania) where there have been subdivisions in the last century (ibid).<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>37</sup> This concept tends to be overlooked in most of the literature.

## **2.4 Migration in the West African Region**

West Africa is an area with particularly long traditions of population mobility. Trade between localities and regions is a well-established economic strategy in West Africa that was fully developed long before colonial boundaries were drawn. As a result, the peoples of West Africa have a strong affinity for traveling (Kasanga & Avis, 1988). In discussing trade within West Africa, Clapperton (1929) describes the presence in the town of Kaiama of “a caravan consisting of upward of 1000 men and women, and as many beasts of burden on their way back to Hausaland after a long trading trip to Gonja and Ashanti.” (Cited in Boahen, 1966:105). These trans-Saharan caravan routes are therefore, among the earliest evidence of major interaction between West and North Africa for trading and exchange of scholars (Kasanga & Avis, 1988).

According to Anarfi et al. (2001), interregional trade within the West African region dates back to a period before colonization. The authors assert that during this period, trade activities stimulated flows of traders from neighbouring territories who brought kola nuts, ivory, sheep, cattle, hides of wild animals and clothes to Salaga market. Thus, pre-colonial migration in West Africa was basically oriented toward trade, labor, agriculture, and to a lesser extent religion, and these occurred without legal restraints and barriers (Adepoju, 2000). The absence of strict or legal boundary restrictions made it possible for nomads, farm workers, seamen, traders, and preachers alike to migrate freely and frequently across international borders, even during the pre-colonial era.

An important fact that emerges from the migration literature on West Africa is that population movements in the pre-colonial era were associated largely with the prevailing economic, socio-political and ecological conditions, especially the search for farm land and trade, as well as warfare and slavery (Adepoju, 1995a). Migration formed an integral part of the social fabric. It has, therefore, been suggested that the contemporary phenomenon of out-migration from the rural areas of West Africa may represent a continuation of earlier migratory movements (Kasanga & Avis, 1988).

#### 2.4.1 Colonial Interferences in West Africa

The discussions show that much of the population movement that took place between the years of European expansionism and the end of colonization in West Africa could be arrayed chronologically as commencing with trade, followed by farming and slavery, and later on by the migration of Europeans to Africa (Anquandah, 1982). According to Sudarkasa (1974-75 cited in Anarfi, 1989), migration for the purpose of trade and agriculture gained momentum in the colonial era. This situation the author asserts resulted from the relative peace that prevailed in the region following the end of inter-tribal wars, and the establishment of better lines of communication.

Movement within the region was also exacerbated by the stronger economies of Nigeria, Cote d'Ivoire and Ghana, which pulled migrants from other parts of the West African region (Swindell, 1985; Adepoju, 1995a). However, the presence of Europeans on the West Coast from the 1400s onwards disrupted existing north-south movement of people

and goods, and created new patterns of movement, first through slave trade and later colonization within the sub-region, and with the rest of the world (Kasanga & Avis, 1988).

The literature reveals that although various patterns of migration existed prior to colonization, rural migration began in many West African countries as a result of colonial policies and practices, which superimposed a monetized economy on peasant production (Kasanga & Avis, 1988; Cleveland, 1991). Both the pattern of rural migration and the evolving character of the agrarian response to it can be viewed as the consequences of the integration of the local economies of West Africa into the expanding world capitalist system (Swindell, 1985). This process entailed the restructuring of the prevailing pre-capitalist modes of production, which was done through the introduction of cash crops. Restructuring involved the establishment of one of many modes of agricultural production within what came to be identified as the colonial territories of various European nations (Mabogunje 1990).

The goal of the colonialists was to increase cash crop production and this required more male labour. This could only be obtained through a well orchestrated gendered pattern of recruitment, and so a high degree of coercion was needed to initiate it (Adepoju, 1995b). Head taxes were, therefore, introduced to encourage small farmers to produce cash crops and to sell their labor to European plantations and mines (Anarfi et al., 2001). Other colonial taxation policies also required cash payments and, therefore, necessitated wage work (Kasanga & Avis, 1988). In many areas, peasant cash crop production led

indirectly to out-migration by men to look for jobs (Swindell, 1985). This was because cash crop had disrupted the production of food crops, resulting in a need to engage in wage labor to pay for foodstuffs.

The mechanisms of procuring labor for these various modes of colonial production had far-reaching consequences for traditional institutional arrangements and rural class formation (Mabogunje 1990). Since most of the people migrating to work on cash crop farms were males, the women were left in the households in the rural areas (Adepoju, 1995b; Bailey et al., 1998). Colonial labour practices and recruitment system, therefore, produced disproportionate migration of males and females. This led to a gender imbalance in rural and urban areas that persisted for a long time and continued even after independence (Nabila, 1986; Mabogunje 1990). .

The colonial modes of production, beyond their more obvious effects on such matters as race relations, employment and land tenure system, also exerted a traumatic impact on the rural social structure (Swindell, 1985). However, as country after country attained independence in the 1960s and after, migration patterns changed and the economic and political terrain of West Africa changed as well (Adepoju, 2000:42). It is against this historical background that the thesis endeavours to locate the historical trends of migration in Ghana.

## **2.5 The Historical Trend of Migration in Ghana**

### **2.5.1 Migration during the Pre-colonial Era**

The historical experience of migration in Ghana mirrors the pattern that existed within the West African region. As a result of Ghana's central location in the West African region, the country was a key component of established trade routes, especially during the pre-colonial era (Kasanga & Avis, 1988; Anarfi et al., 2001). These important migration routes related to agriculture, nomadic movements and trade have been used for centuries. According to Sudarkasa (1974-75 cited in Anarfi, 1989), migration for the purpose of trade and agriculture gained momentum in the colonial era. This situation the author asserts resulted from the relative peace that prevailed in the region following the end of inter-tribal wars, and the establishment of better lines of communication. Migration therefore, formed an integral part of the social fabric of the country and impacted the demographic, economic and socio-cultural aspect and gender relations of the society (Kasanga & Avis, 1988; Abdulai, 1999).

### **2.5.2 Migration during the Colonial Era**

The migratory trend in Ghana continued well into the colonial era. Apart from the labour migration into the country, there are also significant historical movements of people within Ghana itself. After the 1890s, private individuals were also attracted to Ghana by the seemingly unlimited economic possibilities held out in an era of legitimate trade, by



the vast expanse of fertile, unoccupied agricultural lands of the region (Amin, 1974). In addition to traders, the development of gold mines and cocoa farms from the late nineteenth century to the second half of the twentieth century attracted immigrants from other parts of the country (Cleveland, 1991).

The development of these gold mines and cocoa farms, however, later resulted in the shortage of labour in the colony (Mabogunje 1990). This problem came about as a result of the fact that the Akan mine labourers resented underground work. They believed that underground mining was associated with unfriendly spirits. They also viewed underground mining as a low status activity associated with slaves and, therefore, degrading (Swindell, 1985). In addition, the Akans could reasonably subsist on the cultivation of traditional food crops such as plantain, cocoyams, bananas, cassava, yams, and green vegetables, supplemented by hunting and fishing (Kasanga & Avis, 1988). Consequently there was no pressing need for them to sell their labour to Europeans in order to earn a living. Migrant labourers from the other West African countries migrated to work in the mines in the nineteenth century (Awusabo-Asare et al, 2000).

During the colonial period, the cocoa industry also required intensive labour and provided inducements in the form of high wages (Ababio, 1999). The cocoa farms were very productive and the boom of the 1930s in Ghana worsened further the shortage of labour to work underground, as work in the cocoa industry was more attractive than work in the mines (Swindell, 1985; Findlay, 1995). This situation compelled the colonial government to seek out alternative sources of labour by encouraging labour migrants

from a variety of neighbouring countries to be employed in Ghana in response to this labour shortage (Swindell, 1985). Workers came from Liberia and Sierra Leone, whilst even larger numbers of unskilled migrant workers were recruited from the French West African colonies of Upper Volta (now Burkina Faso), Togo, Ivory Coast, Mali, Benin and Nigeria (Cleveland, 1991).

Upper Volta (Burkina Faso) was the main source of migrant labour in West Africa during the colonial era. In the 1913 population census, it was reported that the number of African foreigners working in the Ghana was 4,142 (Cardinall 1931 cited in Anarfi, 1989). With the expanded cultivation of cocoa in the year following World War Two, Malians also migrated into the country. Out of the 350,000 Malians who were residing outside their country in 1960, as many as 19,367 were living in Ghana (Zacharia & Conde 1981).

The colonial era also saw the establishment of huge rubber plantations in Liberia that also required a lot of farm labour (Adepoju, 1995a). The reduction in the supply of Kru labourers to Ghana due to the development of rubber plantations in Liberia and the unwillingness of the Akans to work underground made the mining companies consider importation of unskilled labourers from northern Ghana (Conde, 1987; Abdulai, 1999). The Northern Territories were deemed by the colonial regime to have little direct economic value. Hence in the 1920s, Governor Guggisberg designated the territories as a labour reserve for the supply of cheap labour for the mines and general labour in the cities in the South (Guggisberg, 1920 cited in Cleveland, 1991). When Guggisberg

launched his development plan in November 1919, he calculated that a labour force of 27,000 men would be needed and suggested that a special recruitment be organized in the Northern Territories (Fage, 1959). The period 1919 to 1924, therefore, saw the acceleration of labour recruitment in the Northern Territories (Anarfi et al., 2001).

The period of inactivity in the Northern Territories corresponds to the time of peak agricultural demand in the cocoa regions of the forest zone, so that labourers from the Northern Territories could migrate to the south to work on a seasonal basis and return home for the single growing season (Adepoju, 1995a). This form of migration has been occurring in the country since the beginning of the twentieth century. However, the decline in the cocoa industry in the 1970s and 1980s resulted in a dramatic fall in this kind of seasonal migration (Swindell, 1985). As a result of the fall in demand for seasonal labour on cocoa farms, most of the seasonal migrants from the North found employment either in the informal sectors of the urban centers or plantations in neighbouring countries such as Cote d'Ivoire and Togo (Anquandah, 1982).

The development and recruitment practices of the colonialists led to the creation of two unequal worlds of the "colonizer" and the "colonized," as well as a sharp dichotomy between "urban" and "rural" (Mabogunje 1990). The colonialists also practiced a system of urban bias toward the development of the colony, whereby only areas with natural resources to promote their economic agenda were developed (Fadoyomi, 1990). For example, fertile areas for cocoa farms, mining areas, and coastal cities that served as their ports and administrative centers were developed, while rural areas with fewer natural

resources were neglected (Akinboade, 1999). The towns were established either for “industrial” or administrative purposes and mainly to serve colonial interest. The building of government offices and the establishment of commercial houses by European traders and infrastructure in these relevant cities and towns all contributed to their development and employment opportunities (Ewusi, 1987).

The national capital was moved from Cape Coast to Accra, and became the center of administration and politics for the colonialists. Many industries were located in Accra and the construction of the Tema harbour added further impetus to the national capital (Fage, 1959). The cities and towns also became the main locations to look for jobs, as these were the only places where employment existed. Therefore, men who were employable were compelled to migrate from the rural areas in the cities and towns, thereby perpetuating the process of rural-urban migration (Caldwell, 1969).

In Ghana as in most countries in West Africa, the primary aim of colonial manpower development was attracting and maintaining sufficient number of workers for the colonial labour force (Cummings, 1985). This workforce was not established for the purpose of local African development, but rather for colonial enterprises, industries, farms and coastal plantations. Cheap labour force was always the goal for the colonialist who actively recruited migrant male workers for this purpose (Kasanga & Avis, 1988). It was also this same labour market that created a labour reserve especially in the rural areas to be used at will by the colonial employers. The “commodification” of the African labour meant that there was control of entry into the urban labour market (Cummings, 1985).

The other feature of the colonial urban labour market was that men were predominantly employed on temporary basis with the assumption that they would eventually return to their rural home where they would be with their wives and children (Addo & Kwegyir, 1990). However in reality, this was not the intention of the colonizer, whose aim was to have a constant supply of cheap labour. The direct negative effect this had on the Ghanaian worker who was “fortunate” enough to be employed in the urban areas was that the man who was usually the urban worker, was paid too little to afford to bring his wife or family to the urban areas (Nabila, 1986).

Thus by and large, the so-called “two-household” Ghanaian family with the man as head of household residing in the urban area and the wife in the rural area was created (Findlay, 1995). Colonial labour practices and recruitment system, therefore, produced disproportionate migration of males and females contributing to further uneven development (Jerve, 2001). This led to a gender imbalance in cities that was to persist for a long time after independence. Thus the colonial era can be said to have been the genesis of urbanization or rural-urban migration in Ghana.

### 2.5.3 Post Independence Era

After independence in 1957, Ghana continued to attract migrants due to its relative affluence. In addition, the foreign policy of the new government was geared towards the promotion of pan-Africanism (Fage, 1959). Hence Ghana became a haven for a number of African freedom fighters and pan-Africanists. According to the 1960 census results,

non-Ghanaians accounted for 12 percent of the enumerated population. Migrants from other African countries constituted 98 per cent of the foreign population (Anarfi, 1989).

The unequal regional development established during the colonial period had created regional development differentials as regions with natural resources and urban areas were provided with more financial resources to the detriment of the rural areas (Ewusi, 1987). The historical pattern of socio-economic development in Ghana has, thereby, created three distinct geographic identities. These are the coastal zone dominated by Accra-Tema and Secondi-Takoradi; a middle zone with Kumasi as its centre and the northern savanna zone (Kumekpor, 1971). The coastal zone, as the most industrialized and urbanized area in the country has been the focus of internal migration since the beginning of the last century (Caldwell, 1969). With the opening of Takoradi as a deep-sea port in 1927, Secondi-Takoradi became another point of attraction for migrants in addition to Accra along the coast (Laverle, 1995). In the 1960s, the development of Tema port and township shifted the focus of migration back to the Accra-Tema metropolitan area (Zacharia & Nair, 1980).

The middle zone belt, with its forest, mining and agricultural potential, was the centre of the old Ashanti empire. With its natural endowment, the middle belt became an area of rapid socio-economic development in the 1980s (Konseiga, 2003). Kumasi, the capital of the Ashanti region, became a dominant centre in the country and became the focus of migration from the savannah belt (Nabila 1986). Thus the relative affluence of the coastal zone and the middle belt created focal points for migration within the country.

Nabila (1974) asserts that the existence of economic development in regions along coastal Ghana made them growth points and centers of attraction for migration. Accra as the national capital developed and continued to grow in size because it was the base of the colonial administration (Laverle, 1995). A city like Kumasi, the headquarters of settler agriculture, attracted not only settlers in its vicinity, but also large squatter settlements of labourers from northern Ghana (Caldwell, 1969).

#### 2.5.4 Migration in the Contemporary Period

Today, the directions and magnitude of migration streams in the country have, on the whole, been influenced significantly by the existence of regional inequalities in socio-economic development and employment and related opportunities (Caldwell, 1969; Gugler, 2002). The pattern of public expenditure during the various development plan periods shows that the urban areas, which account for about 20 per cent of the country's population, receive roughly a-half of total plan allocation, while the rural areas that account for 80 per cent of the country's population get the other half (Ardayfio-Schandorf, 1993). In fact, the overall development strategy of the country has always been biased against rural areas. Today, the urban bias of development is evident in relatively larger public expenditure incurred in urban areas on social infrastructure and basic amenities like health, education, water and sanitation, and social services (Ansu-Kyeremeh, 1997; Asibuo, 2000).

Expenditure on primary health care and primary education, of which the major beneficiaries are the rural people, is a small proportion of total sectoral allocations, while the largest portion of the allocations goes to secondary and tertiary health facilities, universities, and institutions of higher learning, all of which are located in the urban areas (Ewusi, 1986; Awumbila, 2001; GSS 2002a). Similarly, budgetary resources of the transport sector are spent generally in building urban-related capital-intensive facilities like bridges, roads and highways (GSS, 1986). Again, allocation to industry, which goes mainly to large and medium scale publicly owned enterprises, mainly benefits the urban areas where these industries are located (Sarfo, 1987; Addo & Kwegyir, 1990). Small and cottage industries, which are usually located in rural areas, receive little support and encouragement in official policy statements and actions (Amanor, 2001). All these clearly show that government policy and programmes have a built-in bias towards the urban areas, which is an important contributor to the process of rural-urban migration.

The direction of migration is generally geared towards urban areas because they are also more economically stable and have more employment opportunities than rural areas (Mabogunje, 1989; Adepoju, 2000). Less migration occurs in the more fertile and more economically advantaged regions such as Ashanti region because of cash crop farming which offers employment to people (Nabila, 1986). In 1984, the net-migration rate for Greater Accra region was 11.3% and this figure increased to 30% in 2000. This means that the region experienced the largest net-gain of population between 1984 and 2000 (GSS, 2002b). This was followed by the Western region which had 17.3% net-gain, and then the Brong Ahafo with 8.5% in the year 2000 (ibid).



The regions that has large net-loses of population in 2000 were Upper West region, which had a net-loss of (-33.7%), followed by the Volta region with (-25.9%) and lastly the Upper East region with (-22.4%). This implies that these regions lost 33.7%, 25.9% and 22.4% of their populations respectively to other regions. Ironically, these regions are also among the least developed in the country (GSS, 2002a). It can, therefore, be inferred that people are migrating to regions that are better developed, which in turn translates into better economic opportunities.

The Greater Accra region continues to be the main destination for most migrants. According to the 2000 Ghana Population and Housing Census, the population growth rate of the Greater Accra region was 4.4% between 1984 and 2000, compared to the national growth rate of 2.7% per annum during the same period (GSS, 2002a). To make the point even clearer, in 2000 for instance, the population density of Ghana was 79.3 persons per square kilometer, whilst Greater Accra region had a population density of 895.5 persons per square kilometer. Thus out of the 20 largest localities in Ghana in 2000, 25% are in the Greater Accra region (GSS 2002b). The Volta region has always been a net out-migration area (Nukunya, 1972). With its seasonal rainfall, the absence of industries and general neglect, the region has historically provided labour for the public service, cocoa growing areas as well as the fishing industry in the coastal zone (Kludze, 1988).

## **2.6 Migration in other Regions of SSA**

Migration has occurred in other regions in sub-Saharan Africa from pre-colonial to contemporary times. The patterns of migration, however, are substantially different from the West African situation (Mabojunge, 1989; Adepoju, 1995b).

### **2.6.1 Southern Africa**

Southern Africa has also been marked by high rates of population mobility (Fraser, 1993). This situation, however, has also been underpinned by colonial and apartheid policies, which have strongly determined labour movements within the region (de Jong, 2000). The countries of Southern Africa were basically English and Portuguese speaking from colonial times, and were characterized by large-scale migrant labour exchanges early in their written history (Adepoju, 1995b). Originating with farm labour, labour migrancy exploded throughout the region with the rise to dominance of South Africa's mining industry. The early diamond-mining boom was quickly overshadowed by the organized migration that followed the opening up of the gold mines on the Witwatersrand in the 1880s. The labour migrant system mainly defined migration patterns in Southern Africa in these years.

For close to a hundred years, massive migration from the Southern African region to South Africa was institutionalized (Foote et al., 1993:87). Most of the unskilled labourers who were brought to the gold mines in those days were sourced from

Mozambique. Governments in the region had agreements with South Africa regarding the shipment of their citizens as labour migrants to South African mines and farms (Mabogunje, 2000:103). Many people from Malawi, Zambia and Zimbabwe migrated within the region after the formation of their short-lived federation (Crush, 2001). Migrant workers who were only males lived in residences built close to the mining areas, while their wives and children remained in the rural areas. Recent survey data from the Development Bank of South Africa (DBSA) suggest that migration, in the sense of population movement away from communities of origin and into new localities, has become the rule and not the exception for most of South Africa's coastal provinces (Oucho, 1998:67).

### 2.6.2 East Africa

Eastern Africa has a long history of labor migration between and within countries to plantations (cotton and coffee in Uganda), to mines (the Democratic Republic of Congo and Uganda), and with the seasons (pastoralist communities in Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda) (Shapiro, 1991:23). Workers from Burundi, Malawi, Mozambique, and Rwanda were recruited to Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda for employment in agricultural estates. After World War II, East Africa was united under British control into British East Africa. In the post-colonial era, Uganda, Tanzania and Kenya were quick to form a three-nation bloc, the East Africa Community (EAC) (Due & White, 1986). These ties enhanced migration between these countries during and after colonialism. Migrants moved within

the region to take up employment, trade, visit or join relatives, herd animals or engage in religious practices (Byerlee, 1974:52-55).

Many countries in the region have also experienced substantial movements of refugees and internally displaced people (DFID 2004a). In particular, Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda host substantial refugee populations. In addition, the liberation wars in Southern Africa drew intensive support in Tanzania. A large population of exiles from Mozambique, Zimbabwe and South Africa found refuge in this country, which due to its university, was seen at the time as the intellectual heart of the anti-apartheid struggle (Foote et al., 1993). During the 1980s, one-third of Kenyan rural household heads were estimated to have out-migrated (Abate, 1995). A rapid Appraisal Survey of Eritrea in 1993-94 also noted the heavy reliance of villages on seasonal migration of young men to nearby towns, the movement of some to Saudi Arabia, and migration of entire families with livestock during the years of poor rainfall (Agesa & Kim, 2001:72). In Ethiopia, mobility has increased as population movement controls have been relaxed or removed.

Migration could also be seen as having an ethnic element in Kenya when one looks at other practices that are group specific. The Maasai, for instance, who are the cattle pastoralists of Kenya and Tanzania, are losing land to agriculturalists and to game parks, and the size of household herds is now a fraction of what it was before independence (Shapiro, 1991). Of late they have also started tracking into towns, where the men take up odd jobs while women often fall into prostitution. The tragedy facing the Maasai is

that they are largely uneducated and therefore excluded from taking up gainful employment as they lose their herding economy (ibid).

## **2.7 Gender Analysis of Migration in SSA**

The impact of rural-urban migration on families in SSA still reflects tensions between the importance of gendered differentials in economic survival and social displacement (Chant, 2002; Amin, 1995).<sup>38</sup> In Southern Africa where urbanization is higher, the legacy of out-migration from the agricultural economies to the more industrialized South African economy continues to have a profound impact on the structure of families (Murray, 1981). Studies from Swaziland show that labor migration has disrupted kinship ties (Foote et al., 1993). The out-migration of Swazi men to South African mines has forced women to undertake the rearing of children alone. Many households lack the stabilizing influence of a father and are thus incapable of providing the support network needed for family stability (Oucho, 1998). In addition, the large numbers of single women in Swaziland has increased poverty levels, yet ironically, while single women may be poorer, they have more control of household resources and are freer to direct more resources towards health, than women who live with men (Foote et al., 1993).

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<sup>38</sup> Gender permeates all facets of our lives, making the need for gender based analysis go beyond those policies that are specifically targeted at women. Policies related to migration, rural development, health, finance, the environment, or even transportation all have the potential to either perpetuate gender-based inequities or to alleviate them in some way.

Nowhere are the implications of migration on family structures felt more than in Lesotho. A recent study reveals that virtually every Lesotho household depends directly or indirectly on migrant financial remittances from South Africa for survival (Adepoju, 2006; Murray, 1981). Out-migration has invariably led to the decline of agricultural production as wives of migrants are entrusted, or rather left to struggle with the responsibility with subsistence farming households. Meanwhile erratic rains, drought, shortage of fertile land, and lack of markets for farm products have all compounded the decline of agricultural livelihoods (Murray, 1981). More importantly, 1 out of 10 Lesotho married men working in South Africa has abandoned his wife and taken on new ones in South Africa (de Jong, 2000; Zachariah, Condé & Nair, 1980:74-76).

Elsewhere in Africa, especially West Africa, the mobility of young males in search of opportunities in urban areas remains a constant feature of migration (Adepoju, 1995b; de Jong, 2000). Although the number of migrant women is increasing, women who migrate are mainly educated, those seeking to join husbands already in towns, or the heads of the burgeoning number of single-parent families (Chant & Radcliffe, 1992). Murray (1981) argues that these trends have undermined the solidity of the traditional family, created new family structures, and transferred social responsibilities at the expense of traditional institutions (Agesa & Agesa, 1999).

Brydon (1987) also asserts that the historical male out-migration has led to modification of the family structure. This in turn, has transformed women's social and economic position to their detriment, and the central role that women play in the migrant labour system has been undermined. The discussion of historical and contemporary patterns of

migration in SSA reveals the existence of various types of internal migration, which are not unique to the region, but could also be found in other regions of the world.

## **2.8 Types and Trends in Global Migration**

The literature reveals that there are four types of internal migration, viz, rural-urban, urban-urban, rural-rural, and urban-rural migration. The most important form of internal migration evident from the discussion is rural-urban migration (IOM, 2002:13; Sander, 2003). However, recently, more attention has also been paid to the other migration streams (Dao, 2002:19; Anh, 2003:51). Often, all these four types of migration patterns are present in a country, and can sometimes be observed within the same locality. Almost, all these types of migration patterns are undertaken mostly by men. There are, however, an increasing number of women also participating in migration (IOM, 2005).

The patterns of internal migration vary within each society, but some broad trends can be distinguished. Some of these are context specific, while others are replicated in other regions of the world. Many new patterns have also emerged which depend to a large extent on regional development trajectories and economic transformations (Mabogunje, 2000; Anh et al., 2003). The pattern of migration that occurs in a country is usually indicative of its socio-economic situation, and can, therefore, be seen as a very important phenomenon for development (Zachariah & Conde 1981:98-99). These include urbanization and manufacturing in Asia, more circulation within urban areas in Latin

America, and increased occupational diversification and mobility in response to macroeconomic reforms in sub-Saharan Africa (Gugler, 2002; Yang, 2004).

### 2.8.1 Rural-Urban Migration

In most developing countries, a shift from subsistence to cash crop production or manufacturing has resulted in the temporary or permanent exodus of men, and sometimes women, from rural communities to urban areas in search of wage employment opportunities (Deshingkar & Grimm, 2005:6). Much of this migration is relatively long-distance to the larger cities and manufacturing centers (Zhao, 2003:9). However, there are also smaller moves, typically undertaken by poorer people, to smaller towns where they work as labourers, small traders and/or artisans (Dao, 2002:11). Rural-urban migration was once regarded as a natural process of economic development, whereby the surplus manpower released from the rural sector was needed for urban industrial growth (Todaro, 1969; Weeks, 1989). However, in more recent times, the perspective on rural-urban migration has undergone a sharp reversal (Deshingkar & Grimm, 2005:23).

Rural-urban migration has come to be viewed by some policymakers and urban planners as having a negative effect on the development of cities in many countries by creating slum areas and increasing the crime rate (Gazdar, 2003; Yang, 2004). As a result, the current policy climate in several countries continues to curtail this important route to poverty reduction and economic development, through regulations on population movements and limitations on informal sector activities (Harteveld, 2004:57). Rural-



urban migration is the most predominant type of migration in developing countries, including Ghana. However, the other types of migration also exist, even though on a smaller scale. Figures from the Ghana Statistical Service (GSS, 2000a) indicate that about 35% of migratory movements within the country are rural-urban, followed by 18% seasonal migration, 14% rural-rural and 23% urban-urban migration.

In South-East and East Asia, urbanization and an expansion of manufacturing, especially for export, have led to enormous increases in both short and long term migration (Yang, 2004). However, contrary to the situation in SSA, most of the rural-urban migrants in South-East and East Asia are women who work in the garment factories in the cities (Hugo, 2003). In Bangladesh, two-thirds of all migration is from rural to urban areas, and is increasing rapidly (Afshar, 2003). Zhao (2003) argues that a number of changes have occurred simultaneously in China, thereby creating more internal movement of people. According to the author, China is a special case where economic policies, such as market liberalization, the lifting of employment and movement controls, and the spread of export-oriented manufacturing, has resulted in an unprecedented increase in population movement. According to Yang (2004:93), the Chinese situation has been greatly aided by relatively good road networks, communication technology and export market links that have emerged in China and other Asian countries, which has opened up their economies.

In India where rural-rural movements from poor areas to rich areas have been the dominant form of migration, there has been a sharp increase in rural-urban migration in recent years as more young men travel to urban centers work in construction and urban

services within the expanding informal sector (Hugo, 2003:67). For example, studies in areas of Bihar that have experienced a doubling of out-migration rates since the 1970s, show that migration is now mainly to urban areas and not to the traditional destinations in irrigated Punjab where work availability has declined (ibid:71).

### 2.8.2 Rural-Rural Migration

Rural-rural migration is typically undertaken by poorer groups of men and women who have little education and other assets, because it requires lower investments (Deshingkar & Start, 2003). In many poor countries rural-rural migration still dominates, with labourers from poorer regions traveling to the agriculturally prosperous, often irrigated, areas which have more work (Konseiga, 2003:71). In Nepal, for example, rural-rural migration from poor mountainous areas to the agriculturally prosperous plains accounts for 68% of the total population movement, whilst rural-urban accounts for only 25% (Anh, 2003:42). Migration for groundnut cultivation in Senegal is one prominent example of rural-rural migration in sub-Saharan Africa (Gugler & Ludwar-Ene, 1995:62). In East Asia rural-rural migration is undertaken predominantly by women farmers (Anh, 2003:42).

Rural-rural migration also occurs in Ghana, whereby men travel from either the northern or less fertile regions to the more fertile cocoa growing areas of Ashanti, Brong Ahafo and northern part of the Volta region during the farming season to be employed as labourers (Study Results, 2006; Barrett et al., 2001). However, contrary to the south Asia

case, in Ghana, it is men who travel to the cocoa growing areas. Since the rains arrive earlier in these cocoa growing areas, the men work there and return to work on their own farms during the rainy season (Abdulai, 1996). This type of migration therefore, tends to be seasonal and temporary (Deshingkar & Start, 2003).

### 2.8.3 Urban-Urban Migration

Urban-urban migration flow usually takes place either from one urban area to another, or from the centre of a large urban area to the periphery (Jerve, 2001). This type of migration is the predominant form of spatial movement in Latin America, and has increased steadily since the 1980s (Cerruti & Bertoncello, 2003:46). Prior to the 1970s, most Latin American countries witnessed high levels of rural-urban migration with rapid urbanization (Cerrutti & Bertoncello, 2003). However, these countries are now undergoing a different process of economic and social change with new patterns of mobility.

Migration between urban centers, especially intra-metropolitan migration has become an important form of internal population movement in most of these countries (Jerve, 2001). This form of migration involves the movement of people from the inner cities to work in factories situated on the outskirts of the cities and in peri-urban areas. The purpose is to stimulate urban de-concentration. From a more structural perspective, this latest trend can be related to economic restructuring in the region and the new roles of metropolises.

Anh (2003) however, asserts that the impact of the Latin American migration trend is not yet fully understood, and requires further investigation.

#### 2.8.4 Urban-Rural Migration

Urban-rural migration most usually occurs when people retire back to their villages. Return migration has been documented in various countries and the reasons are rather different in each case. For instance, according to one estimate, a third of Chinese migrants go back to their native homes because they rarely find permanent white collar jobs on which they can retire (Zhao, 2003:56). Using recent household survey data in China, Zhao (2003:57) shows that an average returnee is older, more educated, more likely to be married with a spouse who is never a migrant. A crucial factor for this movement seems to have been access to land in both the city and rural areas (Andersson, 2002:45). This is an indication that both push and pull factors affect the return decision. Andersson, (2002) asserts that returning migrants may bring back a range of skills which can benefit their home areas enormously.

Urban-to-rural migration appears to be more important than previously believed in SSA. The motivation to retire and return to care for the family farm, as well as the occurrence of economic crisis, which can hit harder in cities than rural areas, all contribute to this type of migration flow in SSA (Sahn & Stiffel, 2003:15). The strong link that many Africans retain with their home area is hypothesized by some authors to contribute to these “reverse” urban-to-rural flows (Beauchemin & Bocquier, 2004:67). For instance,

in a study of Mambwe villages of Zambia, it was seen that former migrants returned to their villages in the late 1970s as the copper belt went into decline (Potts & Mutambirwa, 1990:102). However, Bryceson (1999:78) argues that return migration may not be that important outside Southern Africa where the circular migration system was historically strongest. This, the author argues, is because second generation migrants rarely have the option of “returning” to the rural areas because they have no links with the rural areas, and the urban and mining centers become the only home they know.<sup>39</sup>

In Nigeria and Ghana, the retrenchment of workers in both the public and private sectors in the 1980s is thought to have increased return migration. Adepaju (1995) asserts that economic reforms and structural adjustment programmes promoted during the 1980s and 1990s have been seen as an important determinant of urban emigration because they have enhanced unemployment in both public and private sectors, particularly for the older generation. This change may also be due to the generational factor because currently, only a negligible percentage of migrants return to the rural areas.<sup>40</sup> Each type of migration discussed, however, is necessitated by factors which could be broadly

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<sup>39</sup> In the Southern African case, most of these second generation migrants might have been born in the city and lived there all their lives. They therefore do not have an emotional tie to their home areas and to relatives that they may not know. As such, upon retirement, they remain in the cities, with some staying with a son or daughter and their families.

<sup>40</sup> In the West African case earlier generations used to return to the rural areas more often and therefore had a better linkage with households. The current generation, however, do not return home as often, since some prefer to take their wives and children with them to the cities. However, a greater proportion of these migrants return to settle in the village after retirement, whilst a relatively smaller number prefer to remain in the cities, living with their children.

classified as either economic or socio-cultural determinants. These determinants and motivations of rural-urban migration are discussed in the next section.

## **2.9 Overview of Determinants of Migration**

### **2.9.1 Economic Determinants**

Migration theory largely originates from early models of competing economic opportunities and constraints in the rural and urban sectors (Todaro, 1969). The most important traditional determinant for people migrating from rural to urban areas is, therefore, seen as the search for better economic opportunities. Todaro's (1976) early work emphasizes access to employment opportunities as the main determinant for migration. Against this backdrop, Lipton (1995) contends that migration is about competitive labour absorption between different areas, and not just about jobs at the urban end. The author argues that areas that cannot absorb their own employable labour tend to become sending areas. To this, Bryceson (1998, 2000) adds that the rural economy in SSA, for instance, is changing rapidly as the international terms of trade have moved against African small producers.

As a result of the increasingly inadequate income from the cultivation of food crops, contemporary families in much of SSA are diversifying their support base (Jackson, 1996). It is often reported that the need for income diversification through employment, and increased access to cash incomes, is the main reason for male, and to a lesser degree female out-migration from rural areas (Adepoju, 1987). One survey of internal migration

and urbanization in Ghana in the 1970s revealed that over 70% of the respondents gave economic reasons for migrating from their previous locations (Cleveland, 1991:61-64). This suggests that income differentials contribute significantly to internal migration in the country.

Some earlier migration scholars emphasized employment in the formal sector of the economy as the main attraction for rural-urban migrants (Harris & Todaro, 1970:23; Sabot, 1988). Authors with this perception argued that those who are educated are, therefore, more likely to migrate to the urban areas because of the increased likelihood of finding employment, thereby realizing higher incomes than they would have obtained in the rural areas (Connell, et al., 1976). The problem of migrants seeking employment predominantly in the formal sector has, however, ceased to be of much significance since the global economic crisis of the mid 1970s (Adepoju, 1987:46).

During the mid 1970s, even educated people could not find employment in the formal sector of the economy, due to retrenchment of the public service. The situation was even worse for people who were entering the urban areas with relatively lower levels of skills (UN, 1994:59; Ogura, 1991). As such, there was competition for the few available jobs, and unemployment rates increased tremendously during that decade, until the 1980s (Amin, 1995). Due to these historical occurrences, most migrants in these latter decades are not necessarily migrating in search of formal employment per se, but have in mind the alternative of working in the informal sector. Others migrate to the urban areas

specifically to work in the informal sector, knowing very well that they will not have the opportunity to work in the formal sector (Huq, 1989:87; Kanbur & Squire, 2001:75).<sup>41</sup>

Rural-urban migration in recent years in Africa is also partly attributable to the continent's debt and its repayment obligations that have escalated under the economic liberalization regime (Beachemin & Bocquier, 2004:97). Debt repayment, especially, has seriously incapacitated the ability of nation states to provide basic amenities for the population (Bilsborrow, 1992:105). Cameroon, for instance, spent 36% of its national budget on debt servicing during the 1996/97 fiscal year, compared to only 4% that was spent on basic social services (Konseiga, 2003). Similarly, Tanzania's debt payments were four times what the country spent on primary education, and nine times what it spent on basic health during 1996/97 (Mwabu & Thorbecke, 2001:33). The deep cuts in public spending place rural communities, which have usually had less than a fair share of the national cake, more at a disadvantage, thereby encouraging migration from the rural areas into urban destinations (Bilsborrow, 1992; GSS 2002c).

Pertaining to agriculture, trade liberalization and the expansion of the free market, which are central doctrines of globalization, have rendered farming, the predominant occupation of rural dwellers, as a non-competitive and generally unattractive enterprise (Swindell, 1985; Awumbila, 1997). This is a direct consequence of the removal of subsidies on agricultural inputs, such as fertilizers, which has made imported agricultural products cheaper than locally produced ones (Beneria & Fieldman, 1992:52). Jerve, (2001:37)

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<sup>41</sup> Much has been written about the growth of the informal sector in developing countries. For a broad perspective see: ILO, (1981). For a discussion of the informal sector in Ghana, refer to Ninsin (1991).



argues that these pressures have invariably increased an already existing problem of poverty on the African continent, thereby, creating a cycle between inadequate economic conditions, poverty and rural-urban migration.

### **2.9.2 Socio-Cultural Determinants**

Alongside the predominance of economic reasons for migration, socio-cultural factors and expectations have also played a major role in “pushing” people from rural to urban areas (Ewusi, 1987). A key socio-cultural factor used to explain migration from rural to urban areas in most developing countries is the societal expectation of men as the “breadwinners” of the household (Agesa & Kim, 2001:73). Culturally, men are expected to move, and go anywhere to seek that “bread” for their wife and children. It does not matter where they migrate to, so long as they provide the bread! Indeed, such expectation may explain why men are more likely to migrate than women in SSA countries (Clarke & Drinkwater, 2001:84).

Culturally, women are often expected to be left at home tending children and cultivating the family farm, while the men migrate (Little, 1973:86). Elizabeth Francis (2000:59) in her study among the Luo of Kisumu district observed that in Luoland, several generations of men have spent the bulk of their working lives outside the district. Francis noted that most migrants’ wives stayed at home growing crops to feed their children and doing some seasonal trading to earn extra money. Her study also found that women who are most likely to migrate are single or divorced women and widows (ibid:61).

Beside wage differentials, the disproportionate opportunities for development and welfare in towns have made them relatively more attractive to rural dwellers (Billsborrow, 1992:57). This is attributable to regional as well as rural-urban differentials in development. The predominant investment in productive enterprises and infrastructure such as factories, social and health services in urban areas, as well as other actions by the government to make urban areas more attractive, have encouraged rural-urban migration. A study by Ewusi (1987:59) in Ghana found that depressed social conditions at the place of origin are equally compelling motivations for rural people to migrate to urban centers.

An additional factor that has encouraged increased rural-urban migration is the decline in the cost of transport and communication. The extension of road networks into rural areas has significantly decreased the cost involved in the movement of people (Jerve, 2001). The easier movement back and forth from rural and urban areas serves to improve access to information. Due to the improvement in communication systems, in many cases migrants are no longer faced with an unknown destination. This in turn lowers the risks of movement, thereby increasing the chances of rural residents locating jobs in the urban centers (Afshar, 2003:61). Benneh et al (1995) argue that the reduced transport costs between the northern and southern parts of Ghana, for instance, accelerated the north-south migration in the late 1960s and 1970s. It is evident from the literature that a multiple combination of reasons as observed above, will most likely determine those who migrate. However, when all is said and done, migration can be either a personal, or as is the case in most SSA countries, a household decision that sometimes defies all the reasons suggested.

The next section discusses the important role of sustainable livelihood in this study. The strength of the sustainable livelihood approach lies in recognizing the diverse dimensions to poverty, and the multiple strategies that households adopt, such as migration, to adapt to economic change, in order to secure their livelihood (Kamete, 1998:56). Some researchers see poverty as one of the causes of migration, whilst others see migration as a livelihood strategy that is necessary to combat poverty (Frank, 2000:99). The discussion here focuses on creating an understanding of the complexity of changes in livelihood strategies, and the reasons underlying these changes, which may vary, depending on location, gender and relative wealth of households.

## **2.10 An Introduction to the Livelihood Approach**

Rural households earn income from diverse allocations of their natural, physical and human capital assets among various income generating activities (Ellis 1998). The literature offers many reasons why such diversification occurs. Among these might be diminishing returns on increasing investment in certain activities, synergies (economies of scope) among distinct activities, or the lack of markets, which compel self-provision of goods or services the household desires for own consumption (Barrett et al. 2001). Similarly, households may wish to diversify as a strategy for coping with an unexpected shock, or to minimize risk *ex ante* by participating in activities that generate other incomes. The presumption throughout the literature is that households choose such patterns of diversification so as to achieve the best possible standard of living (ibid). The chosen combination of assets and activities is often referred to as the household's

‘livelihood strategy’. A livelihood strategy encompasses not only activities that generate income, but many other kinds of choices, including cultural and social choices, that come together to make up the primary occupation of a household (Ellis 1998).

The concept of a livelihood strategy has become central to development practice in recent years. Nonetheless, given the uncountable possible proportional mixes of activities undertaken by a household, it is not always clear what constitutes a distinct livelihood rather than just a slightly different mix of activities within the same general livelihood (de Haan, 2000; IIED, 2004). A precise operational definition of *livelihood* remains elusive, as does an associated method for identifying livelihoods in quantitative data (Ahn, 2003). This probably helps explain why the more quantitative development scholars (e.g. economists) have been slower to adopt the concept than have the more qualitative ones (e.g. anthropologists and sociologists).

The ability to operationalize the concept of a livelihood strategy becomes especially important when one speaks of ‘improving’ livelihood to paraphrase much current development discourse (Hugo et al, 2001). Implicit in the concept of ‘improvement’ is the suggestion that certain strategies offer households a higher return on their assets, not least of which is household labor migration (de Haan, 2000). Thus approach is quite important in choosing distinct livelihood strategies that earn high returns for households, especially in rural agricultural areas.

## **2.11 The Sustainable Livelihood Framework**

Several conceptual frameworks have been put forward to enhance the understanding of migration and rural livelihood (Lee, 1966; Todaro, 1969; Tacoli, 2001). However, the one that has received much attention in recent times is the concept of “sustainable livelihood” (Carney, 1998:65). The livelihood approach views the world from the point of view of the individuals, households and social groups who are trying to make a living in volatile conditions and with limited assets (Mabogunje, 2000). It provides a framework for understanding the opportunities and assets available to poor people and the sources of their vulnerability, as well as the effects of external organizations, processes and policies on such vulnerabilities (de Haan, 2000). As explained in the ensuing discussion, this approach is, therefore, the most appropriate framework for the purpose this study, which was to investigate and understand the relationships between gender, migration and livelihood from the point of view of vulnerable households who have been impacted by the phenomena.

Chambers and Conway (1992) were among the first to give a scholarly definition of livelihood. However, this study adopts Scoones’ definition, which is a modified version of Chambers & Conway’s as it captures most of the essential features of the model.

Scoones (1998) explains his concept of livelihood as follows:

“A livelihood comprises the capabilities, assets, (including both material and social resources) and activities required as a means of living.” A livelihood is sustainable when it can cope with, and recover from stresses and shocks,

maintain or enhance its capabilities and assets, while not undermining the natural resource base”<sup>42</sup>

Chambers & Conway (1992:41) argue that the ability of households to have access to sustainable livelihood strongly depends on whether or not they have access to five forms of capital assets, that is natural, physical, human, social and financial assets.<sup>43</sup> The idea of a livelihood framework as a tool for analysis is simply to capture the main elements, which comprise the complex livelihoods of people at a given point in time, as well as the course and dynamics of change in livelihoods (Carney, 1998). According to Barrett et al., (2001), the basic elements of most livelihood frameworks are: livelihood resources: what people have, variously referred to as stocks and stores, assets and capital (both tangible and intangible); livelihood strategies: what people do (e.g. agriculture, wage labour, migration); livelihood outcomes: what goals they are pursuing, and the living that results from their activities.

Krantz (2001:96) also asserts that a key point of the sustainable livelihood approach is that it allows the consideration of various factors and processes, which either hinder or enhance poor people’s ability to make a living in an economically and socially sustainable manner. Hugo et al (2001) on the other hand, assert that the sustainable livelihood approach is an analytical framework, which seeks to improve our understanding of how people use the resources at their disposal to make a livelihood.

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<sup>42</sup> Scoones, 1998:5

<sup>43</sup>See glossary attached to the dissertation for detailed definitions for these concepts.

Carney (1998) asserts that these livelihood strategies, however, will differ with regard to whether people have to deal with gradual changes or crises.

The concept of “livelihood” became prominent in the middle of the 1980s with work done by Robert Chambers and the Institute of Development Studies at the University of Sussex (Schafer, 2002:22-23). Schafer further states that: “for Chambers, the livelihood approach and increased participation of the poor were means of correcting the inevitable biases introduced by outsiders deciding what was best for poor people” (ibid:24).

The common theme that runs through all these analysis is that the sustainable livelihood approach can be used as an analytical framework to identify and assess internal and external factors that affect the household’s socio-economic survival. In the case of rural Ghana where agriculture and petty trading are the main sources of livelihood, migration is bound to have implications for households. Much development programming today hinges, if only implicitly, on the assumption that there exist discernible orderings of distinct livelihood strategies and that carefully tailored and implemented interventions can effectively facilitate graduation to more desirable livelihood strategies (England, 2002). These are livelihoods that are associated with improved well-being of household members, such as rural-urban migration. The next section of this chapter discusses the operationalizing of the concept of sustainable livelihood and migration as a livelihood strategy for rural households.

## **2.12 Migration as a Livelihood Strategy**

Several different methods of characterizing household livelihood strategies can be found in the literature. Most commonly, economists group households by shares of income earned in different sectors of the rural economy. For example, Barrett et al. (2001) analyzed the relationship between overall household income and the proportion of income earned in on-farm and off-farm activities in several African countries, noting how these proportions changed across income quartiles and that different income sources became dominant as one moved up the income distribution. Others have examined the potential determinants of diversified income portfolios for rural smallholders (Panuccio, 1989; Twumasi-Ankrah, 1995). The common denominator of this literature is that data on realized incomes underpin most classifications.

An alternative method of analyzing livelihood strategies involves direct examination of the individual household's asset endowment (ILO, 1977; Jackson, 1996). This asset-based approach makes it possible to map a household's asset endowment into its chosen livelihood strategy and then into its income realization (Potts, 2004). However, certain activities may be beyond the reach of rural households without access to the required financial, natural, physical, human or social capital (Toulmin, 2000). This thesis presents a broad approach to identifying livelihood strategies, letting the data direct us as to how best to group households with similar livelihood strategies. Such categorization offers a meaningful and tractable way to operationalize the concept, and to discern broader patterns in livelihood choices for rural agricultural households (IIED, 2004).



Agriculture is notably the most important economic activity of rural households in most developing countries (Kabeer, 1991b; Bird & Shepherd, 2003). In the past it has often been assumed that increased farm productivity would create more non-farm income earning opportunities in the rural economy via linkage effects (Momsen, 1991). However, this assumption is no longer tenable for many poor rural families, as it is obvious that farming on its own is unable to provide a sufficient means of survival (Potts, 2000).

As a result of inadequate income from agriculture, most households are compelled to embark on livelihood diversification strategies such as migration, in order to vary the sources of household income (Afshar, 2003). In sub-Saharan Africa, most household level diversification is not just non-farm, but also non-rural in character, such as rural-urban migration (Beals & Menzes, 1970:63-65; Drinkwater & Rusinow, 1999:102). The tendency for rural households to engage in multiple occupations is known to policy-makers, but few attempts have been made to link this behaviour in a systematic way to rural poverty reduction policies (de Haan, 1999:23).

It is widely agreed that the capability to diversify livelihood is more beneficial for poor rural households (Toulmin, 2000). Guest (2003) argues that having alternatives for income generation can make the difference between sustainable livelihood and destitution. However, diversification does not have an equalizing effect on rural incomes overall, as families that are relatively better-off are typically more able to diversify their livelihoods than poorer rural families (Ellis, 1998). Additionally, different income sources may have strongly differing impacts on rural inequality (Toulmin, 2000). For

example, unequal access to land and its ownership may mean that a policy to assist with agricultural productivity will favour men above women due to the existing predominantly patriarchal land tenure system that favours men (Bryceson et al., 2003).

Furthermore, migration as a means of diversifying livelihood will also favour men, due to their higher level of education relative to that of women, which subsequently translates into their higher propensity to obtain employment (Toulmin, 2000).<sup>44</sup> Evidence is mixed regarding the gains and losses of household diversification strategies to agriculture (Adepoju, 1995a; FAO, 2000; Toulmin, 2000). Negative effects are associated with the withdrawal of critical labour from the family farm, while positive effects include the alleviation of credit constraints and a reduction risk to income (Club du Sahel, 2000).

However, having said that, I will like to add that it is still important for rural households to diversify their livelihood. This is because diversification of economic activities contributes to the sustainability of rural livelihood, by improving its resilience in the face of adverse economic trends (Barrett et al., 2001). In general, increased diversification promotes greater flexibility because it allows more possibilities for substitution between livelihoods that are in decline and those that are expanding (Findlay & Sow, 1998:72).

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<sup>44</sup> In many developing countries, a woman's role is still defined in terms of marriage and child rearing, and girls' education is seen as less important than boys'. Where there is little educational benefit to be gained, it is not surprising if poverty-stricken parents decide it is not worth incurring the costs of sending a girl to school.

Livelihood diversification results in complex interactions with poverty, agricultural productivity, and gender relations, which are not straightforward, since gender is an integral part of rural livelihood (Bilsborrow, 1992; Francis, 2000). In SSA for instance, women rarely have direct access to land, and their access to other productive resources as well as decision-making tend to occur through the mediation of men (Manuh, 1997; Potts, 2000). Women typically have to deal with a narrower range of choice in the employment market than men. Added to this is the fact that they often receive lower wage rates (Meagher, 2001).

In general, therefore, diversification is more advantageous as an option for rural women than for men. However, due to socio-economic constraints it is the men who tend to migrate in larger numbers, not the women (Caldwell, 1969; Murray, 1981). In encouraging rural-urban migration as a form of livelihood diversification, the process leaves women to manage rural households (Potts & Mutambirwa, 1990:67). Thus although diversification can improve household livelihood security, at the same time it traps women in customary roles such as reproductive responsibilities (Mosse et al., 2002).

The livelihood needs of men and women are not always the same, due to their different roles, responsibilities and resources (Roberts, 1988; Visvanathan et al., 1997). As a result, the consequences of different livelihood interventions will also vary according to gender. For example, a technology to relieve the farm workload of men may result in an increase in the workload of women, or vice versa (Brydon, 1987). Women and men are

likely to differ also in their capacity, authority or availability to participate in livelihood interventions due to differential roles, so attention must be paid to overcoming such barriers (Fan, 2003). All aspects of livelihood analysis should therefore, explore gender, age, sex, and class issues through undertaking a comprehensive approach that encompasses these issues (Waddington & Sabates-Wheeler, 2003).

Although the picture looks gloomy, it is possible for diversification to improve the independent income-generating capabilities of women (Walker, 1990; Afshar, 2003). Thus, for sustainable livelihood diversification to occur, economic activities that are accessible to women need to be promoted in the rural areas (Whatmore et al, 1994; Francis, 2000). In the research communities, for example, women were involved in both agriculture and petty trading as a form of livelihood diversification.<sup>45</sup> Diversification is closely allied to flexibility, resilience and stability (Bryceson et al., 2003). In this sense, diverse livelihood systems are less vulnerable than undiversified ones (England, 2002:113). They are also likely to prove more sustainable over time because they allow for positive adaptation to changing circumstances.

## **2.13 Conclusion**

This chapter has presented a review of selected issues in the existing literature on internal migration, in order to provide a comprehensive background unto which the study findings will be juxtaposed. The discussions on migration in SSA and Ghana show the pattern of

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<sup>45</sup> These women also contribute to a larger share of the family budget responsibilities. See chapter 7 for detailed discussions on the topic.

migration during the pre-colonial era, and its evolution during the colonial period, as well as the broadening scope of human movement as the region has become more integrated into the world economy. The chapter further discussed the sustainable livelihood approach and its relevance to this study.

It is evident from the proceeding discussion that the diversification of livelihood is an important feature of rural survival, but often overlooked by the architects of policy. While the argument of this dissertation suggests that practical applications of the sustainable livelihood framework needs to place diversification high on the policy agenda, it also recognizes that the possible benefits of livelihood diversification such as rural-urban migration are determined by factors that are context-specific.

## CHAPTER 3

### GENDER FRAMEWORK FOR ANALYZING MIGRATION AND LIVELIHOOD

“My husband moved to Accra 5 years ago to look for a job as a mason because there are no jobs in the village. When he left, in the beginning, life was very difficult because he could not find a job. Since he did not have a job he could not send us any money. Because of that I had to do more work on the farm to grow more crops than we need. The little that is left over I sell to buy fish and salt at Kisiflui market. Our four children are between 9 years and 2 years, so they cannot help me much.

I have to do all the work on the farm and in the house and I feel so tired all the time. If I bring a relative to help me I have to feed her and buy her clothes and we have no money for that. Now my husband has a job in Accra and is able to send us some small money every month. The money is not enough, but it helps buy fish and buys the children's clothes and pays for their school needs. After another year or two when my husband is well settled, maybe we will go and live with him.....”<sup>46</sup>

### 3.1 Introduction

The literature reveals six broad and interrelated theoretical perspectives on migration, which include the neoclassical economics, household, networking, structural-functional, political economy, and life course theories of migration. However, most migration theories that have underpinned the migration discourse for decades have been the classical or traditional migration theories (Stark, 1991). These traditional theories of

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<sup>46</sup>Afi Mawuena. (Wife of migrant interviewed as Key Informant through In-depth interviews at Abutia Kloe on January 23, 2006).

migration are important because they provide an insight into population movements within their wider political and economic contexts (Matsola, 2001). However, the biggest limitation to these theories with respect to this study is that they have not addressed the gender aspects of migration in a comprehensive manner (Fortes, 2004:124).

Over the last two decades, there has been modest concerted effort, mainly by feminist researchers, to incorporate gender into theories of migration (Chant, 1998:6; Potts, 2000; Harteveld, 2004:89). However, these studies are few and in-between, and there have been little in-depth study of the effects of rural-urban migration on the livelihoods and reproductive roles of women left behind in rural sending households (Findley & Williams, 1990:76). There is, therefore, the need to develop a theoretical framework that will enable us analyze and understand migration and rural livelihood from a more holistic perspective (Fraser, 1993:48; Bilsborrow, 1993:79).

In this chapter, I discuss a selected number of classical migration theories, and examine why they cannot explain the patterns of internal migration effectively from a gender perspective. I then explore some approaches of women in development in order to draw out linkages between gender and migration within development discourse. Finally, I discuss the main strands of feminism with a focus on African feminism approach, which is more appropriate for discussion of issues that are relevant to women in Ghana.<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>47</sup> It is important to note that there are some theories of relevance to migration that are not covered in this discussion. However, this does not preclude the use of other contributions that are relevant to the thesis.

### 3.2 Theories of Migration

The nature and causes of migration are varied and complex, and there is no general agreement among researchers on the specific causes of migration (Harris & Todaro, 1970; Anderson & Rathbone, 2000; Matlosa, 2001). Arguments on the differences in the determinants and motivations of migration exist not only among researchers from different disciplines, but also among researchers within the same discipline (Caldwell, 1969; Todaro, 1970; Chant, 1998). People who are considering migrating in order to diversify their livelihood take into account many factors, including employment opportunities, services and amenities available at the destination, the monetary costs and returns from migration, and the intangible costs of adapting to a new environment (Cummings, 19, 1985; de Haan, 1999:68).

A number of social scientists and researchers have put forward some theories to explain the dynamics involved in the migration process (Stoufer, 1976:47, Dang, 2003). In general, these theories have sought to explain the decision to migrate and who migrates. However, these theories have proved inadequate in analyzing the gendered causes and effects of migration. In this section I summarize a number of these theories that have been used in analyzing migration and highlight their strengths and weaknesses. I have divided the theoretical discussion on migration into three broad models consisting of dual economy models which emerged in the 1950s and 1960s; the Harris-Todaro models developed in the 1970s and 1980s; and microeconomic models on which much research has focused over the past 15 years, called new economies of labour migration.



### 3.2.1 Dual Economy Models of Rural-urban Migration

The magnitude and patterns of migration have been of interest to social scientists since the laws of migration were first formulated by Ravenstein (1885; 1889) in the 1880s (cited in Adepoju, 1987a).<sup>48</sup> Ravenstein's (1885) migration-distance hypothesis states that migration is inversely related to distance and that most migrations occur over short distances. Thus according to Ravenstein, the number of migrants enumerated in a "centre of absorption" tends to decline as the distance from that location increases. The theory, therefore, stipulated that migrants were attracted to great industrial centers, a proposition that would come to describe rural to urban migration in developing countries in the mid twentieth century.

The second hypothesis of Ravenstein's theory is that migration is inversely related to distance and that most migrations occur over short distances. In this case Ravenstein contended that migrants who are from villages that are closer to an urban centre are more likely to travel in a greater number to these centers. Migration from villages located farther away, he argued, tends to decline as the distance from the city increases (Ravenstein, 1885 cited in Adepoju, 1987a). He also proposed that the inhabitants of a village tend to move first into nearby towns and then later into cities that are farther away from the villages. This, he referred to as migration in stages, which gives rise to step-migration.

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<sup>48</sup> Ernest Ravenstein, an English geographer, is widely regarded as the earliest migration theorist. Ravenstein is credited with development of the initial migration model, based on census data from Britain and Wales. He used patterns of migration in Britain, which was supplemented by data from the United States, to develop what have been termed the "Laws of Migration" in the 1880s (Adepoju, 1987).

Another central argument of Ravenstein is that migration is governed by a “push-pull” process (Connell et al., 1976). The author argued that unfavourable conditions in one place, for example, inadequate employment opportunities and infrastructure, “push” people out from their communities, whilst favourable conditions in an external location “pull” them into the new destination (Dang et al., 2003). Ravenstein also makes the argument that migration differentials such as social class and age influence a person's ability to migrate. The assertion of Ravenstein's laws that the primary cause for migration was better external economic opportunities, is confirmed by many other researches (Adepoju, 1987a), and is also supported by findings from this study.

Adepoju (1987b) in reviewing Ravenstein's migration-differential hypothesis supports his argument that economic motives are the most dominant causes of migration and that development in transport and communication would invariably increase the tempo of migration. However, Adepoju argues against Ravenstein's hypothesis that the volume of migration decreases as distance increases. Adepoju (2000) contends that his hypothesis is less applicable to many migration processes today, as distance may no longer be a great limitation to travel, due to improved transportation and communication, which increases the tempo of migration. Thus the main criticism leveled against the migration-distance hypothesis is that distance is no hindrance to migration, but rather, it is a function of other factors such as desire to maintain contacts in the area of origin, the expense and difficulty of traveling over long distances.

Adepoju (1987b) further asserts that contrary to Ravenstein's theory, migration does not necessarily occur in stages, as people tend to travel over very long distances so long as there are perceived economic opportunities at the destination. In spite of the criticism of the distance hypothesis, Ravenstein's assertion that migration differentials such as social class influence a person's mobility, is one of his greatest contribution to the migration discourse (ibid:112). However, gender is missing from his theoretical arguments for migration, thereby proving it inadequate in providing a comprehensive and gender inclusive analysis of migration.

Many theorists have since followed in Ravenstein's footsteps, and subsequent migration theories in contemporary scholarship are more or less variations of his arguments. Stouffer (1976) suggested that the level of movement between two places is dependent on the number of intervening opportunities between them. An essential feature of this model is its stance that the nature of places, rather than distance, is more important in determining where migrants go. Stouffer, argued that the areas that were nearer to the migrant and offering the highest economic and social opportunities, tended to have a greater influence on migrants' decision to move, compared to areas further off (Stouffer, 1976). For example, if Stouffer's theory is applied to this study, intervening opportunities in the case of Abutia and Accra will be the number of possible alternative migration destinations which may exist between Abutia,<sup>49</sup> which is the sending area, and

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<sup>49</sup> Abutia villages are the rural communities in which the research was conducted.

Accra,<sup>50</sup> the destination. In this case, if a lack of suitable alternative does not exist between the origin and possible destinations, migrants will proceed to farther destinations. This theory may not be particularly applicable to the Abutia case as most people migrate with Accra in mind as their only destination.

Everett Lee (1966) reformulated Ravenstein's theory to give more emphasis to push and pull factors.<sup>51</sup> He developed a framework for analyzing the volume of migration, the characteristics of migration and the decision-making process (Lee, 1966:49). Lee also tried to explain the factors affecting migration in terms of the positive and negative characteristics of both the origin and destination. Lee developed a framework for analyzing the volume of migration, the characteristics of migration and the decision-making process (Lee, 1966:49 cited in Bryceson & Mooji, 2000:73).

The framework classified the pull-factors as the attractions and socio-economic opportunities available in other localities, and he characterized the push-factors to include the deteriorating socio-economic conditions in the areas of origin (Lee, 1966). He argued that areas of origin and destination centers of migration had positive and negative features associated with them. According to Lee, if the negative features of the origin were more powerful, then migrants were pushed out, while at the destination, if the

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<sup>50</sup> Accra is the national capital of Ghana, the favourite destination of most rural-urban migrants.

<sup>51</sup> Lee was a sociologist, and realized that perceptions of migration differ among individuals. He also tried to explain the factors affecting migration in terms of the positive and negative characteristics at both the origin and destination areas (Bryceson & Mooji, 2000:73).

positive features were more powerful, then migrants were pulled in. Since the 1950s in developing countries, rural poverty has pushed migrants out, while higher incomes and cultural amenities associated with the large cities have lured migrants.

Lee (1966:120) also outlined the impact that intervening obstacles have on the migration process. He argued that variables such as distance, physical and political barriers, and dependents such as children, can impede or even prevent migration. The author further pointed out that the migration process is selective because differentials such as age and social class affect how people respond to push-pull factors, and these conditions also shape their ability to overcome intervening obstacles (ibid:123). Furthermore, personal factors such as a person's education, knowledge of a potential receiver population, family ties, and the like, can facilitate or retard migration.

Lee's theory is more applicable to the changing socio-economic context of contemporary society. The author's assertion that migration differentials such as gender, social class and age, and personal factors such as a person's education can facilitate or retard migration, is one of his greatest contribution to the migration discourse (ibid:147). Although Lee mentioned gender as a factor that affects migration, he did not consider it during analysis. As was the case with Ravenstein's theory, Lee's theory also lacks complete applicability due to the changing socio-economic context of contemporary society.

Lewis (1954) cited in Cleveland (1991), tried to explain migration as transition from a stagnant rural agricultural sector to a growing modern industrial urban sector.<sup>52</sup> The assumption of his theory is that along the development course, the industrial sector is expanding and requires more labour, while the agricultural sector is stagnant with labour surplus. Lewis argues that under these circumstances, the labour surplus in rural areas will supplement the labour shortage in urban areas, which serves as the impetus for rural-urban migration. In this model, the author assumes that rural economies initially present a specific context in which there is surplus labour in the agricultural sector. On this consideration, the agricultural sector is able to supply labour force to the modern industrial sector which can grow by accumulating capital and obtaining labour from the agricultural sector (Hugo, 1985:172).

Lewis (1954) asserts that migration occurs until surplus labour is absorbed by the modern sector. However, this model is criticized by some scholars who emphasize that the assumption of zero marginal productivity and remuneration in the agricultural sector is highly debatable (Cole & Sanders, 1985:104). This is because even though agriculture productivity and wages are low, they are not completely non-existent as rural people are able to make a living at the subsistence level. This model might have been applicable in the late 1960s when urban areas experienced high levels of unemployment (Cleveland, 1991:38). However, it does not adequately describe the rural-urban migration process of

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<sup>52</sup> According to Lewis theory, subsistence areas refer to rural agricultural sector where the labour force is suffering from unemployment and underemployment. The urban and modernized areas on the other hand refer to the industrial sector where many employment opportunities are being generated and are also suffering from a labour shortage (Hugo, 1985:170).

many developing countries in contemporary times. Worse still, the theory does not include gender in its analysis of migration.

Another theorist, Zelinsky (1971) cited in Weeks (1989), used critical consideration of temporal shifts in individual and household level migration decisions to explain the “mobility transition hypothesis” of migration. With a focus on the association between modernization and migration, the author asserts that social and economic change is inherent within modernization. These changes, Zelinsky argued, enhance an individual’s personal preferences in migration decision-making processes to move from areas with less opportunities to destinations with modern amenities and opportunities (Weeks, 1989:102). Thus he developed the idea that the modernization process that societies are going through, leads to a changing migration pattern or at least to a changing migration propensity. Ravestein, Lee and Stouffer, have established the relationship between migration and socio-economic development, emphasizing that people will always move when confronted better opportunities.

### 3.2.2 Neoclassical Economist Model of Rural-urban Migration

Several other theories have been developed to examine patterns of migration on their own terms, but these too are variants of the push-pull theory. First, are the widely known neoclassical economic theories that were founded on principles of individual optimizing behaviour (Sjaastad 1962; Todaro, 1969). These traditional micro-economic models treat migration as an economic phenomenon in which the migrant weighs the costs and

returns from current and future employment opportunities. Neoclassical economic theory also suggests that internal migration is related to the global supply and demand for labor (Zaslavskaja & Liaschenko, 1976).

A turning point in migration research by neoclassical economists occurred with seminal work by Todaro in 1969, which is actually considered one of the starting points of the classic rural-urban migration theory. During this period Michael Todaro published a number of papers on migration related issues, and his papers have contributed greatly to the understanding of migration (Todaro, 1969). The key hypothesis of this theory is that migrants react mainly to economic incentives, earnings differentials, and the probability of getting a job at the destination is the major influence in the migration decision. Thus in Todaro's famous model of rural-urban migration, the decision to migrate has been made a function of the wage differentials that exist between urban and rural areas and the probability of finding a job in the city. Todaro's model thus emphasises the importance of the probability of finding a job in cities along with the prevalence of higher wages there, which motivates a prospective migrant to finally migrate.

In other words, the author posits that rural-urban migration will occur while the urban expected wage exceeds the rural wage (Todaro, 1969, 73). The author's "expected incomes" model of migration, therefore, postulates that the decision to migrate includes a perception by the migrant of "expected rather than actual earnings." Todaro's theory presents an economist's view about the motive of migrants. He used his cost-benefit model to explain that in spite of the prevalence of high unemployment in most in-



migration areas, especially the urban centers; migrants are continuously attracted to these areas mainly due to expected income differentials.

In a modified version of the model prepared jointly by Todaro and John Harris, the authors cite factors such as rural-urban differences in expected earning to be the leading cause of the process of migration in which the urban unemployment rate plays an equilibrating role (Harris & Todaro, 1970). The authors' argument on the causes of rural-urban migration is based on their observation that throughout the developing world, rates of rural-urban migration continue to exceed the rates of job creation and to surpass greatly the capacity of both industry and urban social services to absorb this labor effectively (Harris & Todaro, 1970).

The Todaro (1969, 73) and Harris-Todaro (1970) models also consider the role of internal migration in a dual economy in which the urban sector draws labour force from the rural sector. In Todarian models, the focus is on explaining the existence of unemployment in urban areas and its link with internal migration. According to Todaro (1969), individual migration decisions are based on the difference between the expected incomes in urban areas, taking into consideration migration costs.

Furthermore, according to the model by Todaro (1976:140) high levels of rural-urban migration can continue even when urban unemployment rates are high and are known to potential migrants. He suggests that a migrant will move even if he ends up being unemployed or receives a lower urban wage than the rural wage. This happens because

the migrants expect that they will end up with some kinds of job that gives them a good compensation, and therefore they are willing to be unemployed or underpaid and to wait for a better job opportunity in the future (Ibid). This argument explains the high flow of migrants from rural to urban areas, without the assurance of unemployment. Todaro's contribution has provided a framework for much of the econometric work on migration in the past decade. Neo-classical economic explanations, however, assume a homogenous individual, who is undifferentiated by gender, class or other factors, to be making rational decisions to maximize economic interests.

One of the drawbacks of the Todaro model is its assumption of full information on the part of the prospective migrant about the urban wage rate and the probability of finding a job (Todaro & Harris, 1970). This may not always be true. And then it cannot also always be the case that economic factors alone affect the migration process. If we believe in that, we will be ignoring a lot of other factors, like marriage, dependency relations etc. (social factors), floods, river erosion, and drought and so on. Notwithstanding its limitations, the Todaro model points out the very crucial link between perceived employment opportunities and migration.

Various studies corroborate in supporting the contention that the basic motive behind the decision to migrate from rural to urban areas, is guided by a search for employment opportunities in urban settings (Zhao, 1999; Tacoli & Satterthwaite, 2003). There is evidence that after the migration most of the people usually enjoy higher income relative to agricultural income (Adepoju, 1995). The monumental work of Harris and Todaro

also has implication for rural industrialisation. This is because the model predicts that migration will stop when the urban and rural wage levels are equal. This may not, however, be true because migration can take place not only because of economic reasons but, in this process, social and various other factors can be important as well.

### 3.2.3 New Economies Models of Rural-urban Migration

Recent models of internal migration, called New Economies of Migration, adopt a complete change in perspective as they do not explain urban employment as presented by the Harris-Todaro model. Other relevant frameworks operating at the individual or household level include the household theorists (Stark, 1991:72). According to the proponents of the household strategy approach, people act collectively not only to maximize expected income, but also to minimize risks for the members of the kinship unit (Skeldon 1997; Meagher, 2001). This occurs through diversifying household sources of livelihood (Stark, 1991; Whitehead, 1981). A key insight of this approach is that migration decisions are not made by isolated individuals, but rather, by families or households (Krantz, 2001).

In this model, households or families are seen as the principal agents in the decision-making (Lauby & Stark, 1988; Gadzar, 2003). Tacoli (2002) argues that in developing countries, migration is undertaken as part of a family strategy for sustenance, and risk diversification rather than an individual decision. Household Strategy models focus on household power and decision making structures, including between women and men and

young and old within the household, combining structuralism with household analysis (Chant 1992). This concept has been incorporated into the “new economics of migration”, viewing migration as a means by which the household spreads risks (Lauby & Stark, 1988; Stark, 1991).

Another theory, which is of relevance to the discussion on gender, migration and livelihood, is the network theory (Lipton, 1980). This theory attributes migration to personal, cultural, and/or other social ties. The theory argues that in migrant-sending communities, information about jobs and living standards is most efficiently transmitted through an arrangement struck between personal networks such as friends and neighbors who emigrated (Agesa & Kim, 2001:172). According to the authors, migrant communities in destination areas often help their fellow men and women to migrate, find them jobs, and help them adjust to a new environment. These networks, it is argued, assist in the transition period and reduce the financial and psychological costs of migration for newcomers.

Other authors contend that the migrant is also assisted by his/her family through the provision of food packages, while looking for employment (Adepoju, 1995b; Sahn & Stiffel, 2003). Thus the relatively easy way in which new migrants are seen to settle in the cities further induces potential migrants to leave the rural areas. Later on, the family benefits from the migrant through remittances which enable them to cope with adverse economic shocks (ibid: 178). Network theory is indeed applicable to the case of migration in Ghana, where migrants tend to rely on their personal networks. Findings

from my own field research also showed that many migrants found jobs through their friends and relatives.

The life course perspective of migration is another theory, which stresses how an individual's age, and related roles and obligations change through time (Addo & Kwegyir, 1990). Under this perspective, migration is often seen as a normal routine and an expected phase as individuals proceed along their lifetime continuum (Beauchemin & Bocquier, 2004). For example, the departure of children from home in order to attend schools of higher learning as they attain adulthood, find employment in the cities and marry, and settle in the cities. These phenomena are frequently viewed as normal events through the life course perspective. The structural functionalist approach is another migration theory that examines the individual decision to migrate within a broad pattern of social relationships and social-structural conditions, including some economic variables within households (Ghosh, 1992).

This approach generally presents a positive view of migration. In the political economy approach, the historical expansion of capitalism is viewed as the main explanation of migration (Fraser, 1993). This approach assumes that while migration may improve the private economic return of the individual migrant. However, the net short-term and long-term socio-economic effects of migration may be negative in the source area even though positive in the receiving area.

Theoretical frameworks fundamentally shape research approaches, and are invariably an essential underpinning for migration literature (Fraser, 1993; Lorber, 1998; Bryceson, 1999). It is, however, evident from the discussion that traditional migration theories have not addressed the gender aspects of migration. For example, in the neoclassical economic models and the push-pull demographic models of the 1970s and 1980s, migration was seen as the outcome of individual decisions (Snyder & Tadesse, 1995). The development of new economic concepts and theories emphasized the importance of the family or the household as the primary site of decision-making was also criticized.

Critics noted that household decisions and actions do not represent unified and equally beneficial outcomes for all members (Tacoli, 2002). This is because families and represent centers of struggle where people with different activities and interests can come into conflict with one another. When placed within ongoing power relations within households, such diverse interests and activities strongly suggest that the interests of men and women in families do not always coincide. Critics of these traditional theories, therefore, argue that household decisions and actions do not represent unified and equally beneficial outcomes for all members (Achanfuo-Yeboah, 1990).

### 3.3 Gender Gap in Traditional Migration Theories

It is evident that although the classical migration theories claimed gender neutrality and universalism, they were actually modelled on an assumption of a male and rational migrant (Graves & Linneman, 1983; Brydon & Chant, 1992). For decades, women have

been overlooked as internal migrants. In the 1960s and early 1970s the phrase “migrants and their families” referred specifically to “male migrants and their wives and children” (Bilsborrow, 1993; Amin, 1995). In his classic book “A Theory of Migration” Everett Lee (1966:12) wrote that “children are carried along by their parents, willy-nilly, and wives accompany their husbands though it tears them away from environments they love.” In other words, women were nearly always conceptualized as accompanying dependants, and therefore, not given much attention in theoretical accounts of migration (Pdrazza, 1991; Twumasi-Ankrah, 1995). Even when female independent migration for work was recognized as an empirical phenomenon, it was not given special attention, because it was simply thought to mirror the independent economic migration of men (Harris & Todaro, 1970; Bilsborrow, 1993).

### 3.4 The Emergence of Gender in Migration

The inclusion of gender in the migration discourse has been a painfully slow process, which has been occurring gradually over the last few decades, fueled mostly by feminist scholars who have been pushing the issue (Palmer, 1988; Chant & Radcliffe 1992). Robin Cohen (1997:128) notes that migration scholars are “normally a rather conservative breed.” Indeed, migration theory has been slow to incorporate insights from gender research in other areas of the social sciences. Early frameworks of migration scholars did not question the traditional theoretical models used to explain why people moved, where they went, and the impact on households (Nuket, 1991). Instead, differences between men and women were noted, and then explained as reflections of

different sex roles (Connell et al., 1976). Conceptualizations of gender have also reflected the hesitation of mainstream migration literature to accept the challenge of constructivism (hooks, 1984). These studies have rarely treated gender as a central theoretical concern, and as such the insights from case studies on female and male migrants have had little impact on migration theory in general (Adepoju, 1987a).

Since the 1980s, migration theory has indeed become more gender sensitive, moving from the view of males as the predominant migrants and female migrants as simply the wives, to incorporating explanations of the unique experiences of women and men as migrants (Palmer, 1988; Pedraza, 1991; Yang, 2004). Researchers emphasized that not only did women constitute a significant proportion of many migration flows, but they were often primary migrants themselves (Adepoju, 1984; Chant, 1992; IIED, 2004). They asserted that furthermore, women had different experiences of migration than men and most importantly for this study, researchers asserted that migration impacts women and men differently.

One of the central questions about women during this period was whether migration “modernized” women, emancipating them from their assumed traditional values and behaviors (Fadoyomi, 1990; Adams, 1991). Ongoing developments in feminist theory throughout the 1980s and 1990s further contributed to a focus on gender, rather than one based on individual decisions of men and women (Cummings, 1995; Afshar, 2003; Dang & Tacoli, 2003).



The most important view that emerged from migration research is that while sex is defined as a biological outcome of chromosomal structures, gender is “socially constructed” (Dagenas & Piche, 1994; Fan, 2003). In feminist theory, gender is seen as a matrix of identities, behaviors, and power relationships that are constructed by the culture of a society in accordance with sex (Stanley, 1990). This means that the content of gender, what constitutes the ideals, expectations, and behaviors or expressions of masculinity and femininity, will vary among societies (Awumbila, 2001). Also, when people interact with each other, by adhering to this content or departing from it, they either reaffirm or change what is meant by gender, thus affecting social relationships at a particular time or in a particular setting (Ardayfio-Schandorf, 1994). This means that gender is not immutable, but also changes and, in this sense, is both socially constructed and reconstructed through time.

The feminist view of gender as a “social construction” has raised two concerns that have fuelled much of the research in the study of women and migration over the last decade. The first relates to patriarchy, or the hierarchies of power, domination, and control men use to rule women (Findlay & Williams, 1990; Chant, 1992). Feminists are concerned with how patriarchy gives men preferential access to the resources available in society and thereby determines the choice or ability of who migrates. The second concern focuses on the interpersonal relationships between men and women, how women's relationships to family members, including spouses, and their productive and reproductive responsibilities change with migration (Pedraza, 1991; Kabeer, 1994).

The new thinking on migration by feminist scholars addresses a range of economic and non-economic processes and relations to the analysis of migration (Kanaiaupuni, 2000). It helps us to understand the multitude of ways in which certain groups of people are excluded from the migration process based on their gender (Bridge, 1994). De Haan (2000)'s work on migration patterns in Mali shows that the social experience and consequences of migration are not uniform, but shaped by class and gender. The author argues that patterns of migratory movement, which is determined by context-specific and complex dynamics, mediated by social networks, gender relations and household structures. The work by Chant (1992) on gender relations and migration also shows that migration is influenced by the organization of productive and reproductive labour within the household, such as power dynamics, decision-making and gender relations and division of labour in rural households.

We use these new ways of analyzing migration to understand why the pattern of migration varies between locations, social groups and households. This is because migration is embedded in diverse processes, structures and relations. In the case of the Ho district, this includes the norms on the sexual division of labour and balancing complementary livelihoods. The concern of this study is to investigate whether men's migration into the cities to participate in the labor force contributes to women assuming more responsibilities, and affecting their authority within the rural household.

The dissertation recognizes migration to be a gendered social process that involves women and men differently, that engages with ideas about femininity and masculinity, and which is embedded in, as well as impacting on, the power relations between men and women in both sending and receiving areas (Chant & Radcliffe, 1992). Feminist scholarship's intervention in migration studies has not only made women visible in migration, but has also introduced gender as an analytic tool to understand migration (Graves & Linneman, 1983; Agesa & Agesa, 1999). Studies that examine rural-urban migration, where migration creates and sustains social ties and various activities between two locations, often focus on individuals and the interpersonal relationships among individuals (de Haan, 2000).

However, one initiative in migration research undertaken by anthropologists and feminists scholars, is to examine the dynamics of power relationships when men migrate, leaving women behind in the rural areas (Brokerhoff & Hongsook, 1993; Agesa & Kim 2001). The publication of "Gender and Migration" in developing countries in 1992 was an important milestone in research on gender in migration. In their introduction, Sylvia Chant and Sarah Radcliffe (1992) noted that until then, researchers had rarely done more than noting numerical sex differences in migration. According to the authors, there is a need to move beyond discussion of the different migration patterns of men and women.

The point here is that even when the effect on gender relations is not a central concern, gender should be considered in any migration analysis because it is likely to provide more insight into the consequences of migration in a wider sense. Research on gender,

migration and livelihood issues therefore, requires a thorough understanding of both development and feminist theoretical frameworks. The next section presents a discussion of feminist and development frameworks and explains how these perspectives intersected to become two main competing feminist development frameworks of women in development (WID) and gender and development (GAD). In the process, a clarification of conceptual positions is provided as this is crucial for a clear understanding and analysis of the position of rural women, and the impact of migration upon their lives.

### **3.5 Perspectives on Theories of Women in Development**

Prior to the UN Decade for women, (1975-1985), development policies and programs were considered to be gender-neutral. That is, policymakers did not distinguish between men and women in development. Development interventions were assumed to automatically benefit all people equally, men as well as women (Hutchful, 1987; Gordon, 1996). This thinking led to the lumping together of targets of development into undifferentiated categories such as the poor or disadvantaged, without regard to gender roles, practical or strategic needs, or the effects of class and other socio-economic, cultural and political factors (Beneria & Fieldman, 1992; Harcourt 1994).

As feminist researchers probed the issue of gender analysis, it was realized that women and men benefit differently from development initiatives ((Bridge, 1994; Ghorayshi & Belanger, 1996). This awareness led to the idea of promoting the full integration of women in development efforts. The integration of women in development aimed at

higher returns for women in terms of increased output, greater equity and social progress (Harcourt, 1994; Jackson & Pearson, 1998). The advent of this new concept represented an infusion of new ideas or perspectives which aimed at influencing prevailing development policy (Jackson & Pearson, 1998).

The change in perspectives on the concerns of women was reflected in a corresponding change in the concepts used by feminist researchers in gender analysis, which has gradually impacted the thinking and practice of development over the last three decades (Bridge, 1994; Lober, 1998). These concepts have evolved from women in development; to women and development; to gender and development; and to gender mainstreaming. Each denotes a particular era, and each has different policy implications (Desai & Potter, 2002). Other authors have classified the concepts into five approaches in understanding gender and development. These are the welfare approach, which equips women to perform their traditional roles of wives and mothers; the equity approach strives for equity within the modernization development paradigm; the anti-poverty approach, better known as women in development (WID) approach in which income generation is key because poverty is the problem; the efficiency approach, which is also known as women and development (WAD) and the empowerment approach, which is known to many as gender and development (GAD) approach (Moser, 1993; FAO, 1996; Desai & Potter, 2002). For the purpose of this study, we shall discuss only women in development, women and development, gender and development and gender mainstreaming as well as the five policy approaches.

### 3.5.1 Women in Development (WID)

The term WID or “women in development” came into use in the early 1970s after the publication of Esther Boserup’s famous book on Women’s Role in Economic Development in 1970. The book examined the sexual division of labor in predominantly agrarian societies. Rathgeber (1992) contends that the data used as evidence by Boserup was available to social scientists and development planners long ago, but remarkably, she was the first person to systematically use gender as a variable of analysis. Rathgeber adds that even though Boserup’s research has been criticized by authors like Beneria (1982) for its supposed oversimplification of women’s work and roles, it was instrumental in focusing the attention of scholars and development agencies alike on the sexual division of labor and the differential impact of development on women and men.

The WID perspective is closely linked with the dominant modernization paradigm of the 1950s through the 1970s, which decreed that modernization, usually equated with industrialization, would uplift the standard of living of developing countries (Harding, 1986; Chowdhury, 1995). By the 1970s however, this view of modernization was being questioned by many researchers (Momsen & Kinaird, 1993; Mikell, 1997). It was being argued that the relative position of women had, in fact, improved very little over the previous two decades. Under the rubric of WID, the recognition that women’s experience of development and societal change differed from that of men became institutionalized (Nuket, 1991; Harcourt, 1994). It was now legitimate for research to focus specifically on women’s experiences and perceptions.

Although feminist researchers and development agencies acknowledged the contributions of WID, nonetheless the approach was based on several assumptions at odds with critical trends in social sciences research in the 1970s (Rathgeber, 1992). Gardner & Lewis (1996) assert that WID was ahistorical, as it tended to focus on sex and overlooked the impact of gender, race and class issues. The authors maintain that WID policies simply reproduced ethnocentric assumptions about the nature of gender and women's subordination, thus accepting existing social structures. Jackson & Pearson (1998) argue that rather than examine why women fared less well, WID focused only on how women could be integrated into ongoing development initiatives. This non-confrontational approach avoided questioning the sources and nature of women's subordination and oppression, and focused instead on advocacy for more equal participation in projects.

Buvinic et al. (1983) argue that WID tends to focus exclusively on women's productive work, thereby ignoring or minimizing the reproductive side of women's lives. The authors further contend that as a result of this perspective, WID projects mainly had a goal of income generation. Meanwhile, once these income-generating projects become successful, they tend to be appropriated by men. Chao (1999) asserts that WID still most basically remains an "add-on" to mainstream development policy and practice; hence the commitment to gender policy only rarely becomes gender-sensitive practice. It can, therefore, be said that the WID approach failed to challenge prevailing development models. Its focus on paid employment for women did not take into consideration the enormous amount of unpaid work women are already performing (Ahooja-Patel, 1995; Chao, 1999). Additionally, its top-down interventions, focusing on women and not

taking into account their male counterparts tended to create problems especially within the domestic sphere (Snyder & Tadesse, 1995; Klasen, 2005).

The general notion of focusing on women separate from men in some development projects has been accepted by a considerable number of governments of developing countries and international development agencies (Desai & Potter, 2002). However, to some extent this reflects political expediency and should not be interpreted as a sign of fundamental commitment to the liberation of women. According to Brydon & Chant, (1989), the failure of WID to include women's perspective in planning and policymaking resulted in women's marginalization in development.

The WID approach achieved a great deal in creating awareness on the status of women, but much less in terms of concrete achievements in improving their situation (Momsen, 1991). The WID approach offers little defense against this reality, because it does not challenge the basic social relations of gender. It assumes that gender relations will change, as women become full economic partners in development. The limitations of WID, led to the emergence of the WAD approach in the second half of the 1970s.

### 3.5.2 Women and Development

Feminist scholars and activists from the Third World were displeased with WID (Kabeer, 1991; Yeboah, 1998). They argued that the development model that was being followed lacked the perspective of developing countries, and proposed Women and Development



(WAD) as an alternative to WID (Desai & Potter, 2002).<sup>53</sup> WAD focuses on the relationship between women and the development process, rather than purely on strategies to integrate women into development (Bridge, 1994). The WAD approach recognizes that women have always been important economic actors in their various societies (Beneria, 1995). The WAD approach is very important, partly because of its concern for efficiency under the neo-liberal paradigm. Its starting point is that it is a waste of resources, and inefficient to keep women out of the development process (Jackson & Pearson, 1998; Desai & Potter, 2002).

WAD also recognizes that Third World men who lack elite status have also been adversely affected by the structure of inequalities in the international systems (Bortei-Doku, 1991). However, the approach gives little analytical attention to social relations of gender within classes (Visvanathan et al, 1997). Consequently, the question of gender and cross-gender alliances and divisions within classes is not systematically addressed. Rathgeber (1992) argues that, at a theoretical level, WAD recognizes class, but in practical project design and implementation, it tends, like WID, to group women together without taking note of class, race and cultural divisions, all of which may exercise powerful influence on actual social status.

WAD offers a more critical view of women's position than WID, but it fails to offer a full-scale analysis of the relationship between patriarchy, differing modes of production

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<sup>53</sup> The feminist view that being a woman does not necessarily make one gender sensitive is relevant here.

and women's subordination and oppression (Razavi, 1998; Desai & Potter, 2002). The approach implicitly assumes that women's position will improve, if and when international structures become equitable (Gordon, 1996). It is evident that the underrepresentation of women in economic, political and social structures is still identified primarily as a problem. However, it is argued that this problem can be solved by carefully designed intervention strategies rather than more fundamental shifts in gender and social relations.

Not surprisingly, many projects designed to support women using this approach have not yielded the anticipated results (Dagenais & Piche, 1994). One of the major reasons is that few of these projects have recognized that entrance into the wage economy does not reduce the time women spend on their household responsibilities of (Gardner & Lewis, 1996). In rural areas in Ghana particularly, women work an average 10-15 hours per day, a minimum of 70 hours per week (Mikell, 1997).<sup>54</sup> This approach, therefore, relies on the elasticity of women's time without regard for the fact that the cost to women in terms of the demand made on their time and energy may be intolerable (Ardayfio-Schandorf, 1993).

WAD also focuses on income-generating activities and tends to underplay the unproductive labor of women and the need to invest in family and household maintenance (Haddad, 1991). Although this approach has a variety of flaws, one benefit

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<sup>54</sup> This information is supported by the results of our survey. The details are discussed in chapter 8 of the thesis.

is that it provides an insight into the fact that “basic” needs which are usually neglected in households due to inadequate financial resources, can be met through informal income-generating activities of women (Gardner & Lewis, 1996). Having said that it is, however, clear that this approach has not yielded the desired development result of gender equity. Its limitations paved the way for a new approach, known as gender and development.

### 3.5.3 Gender and Development

The introduction of the concept of “mainstreaming gender” rather than “integration of women into development,” led to the shift in focus from “women” to “gender” (Desai & Potter, 2002). This shift in perspective gave rise to the gender and development (GAD) approach, which emerged in the 1980s as an alternative to WAD (Rathgeber, 1992). GAD assumes a holistic perspective of social organization and builds upon socially defined and constructed roles of men and women (Afshar, 1991). Unlike sex, which is biologically determined, gender roles are socially constructed and change from socio-cultural context to another and across time (Buvinic et al. 1983).

The GAD approach is the only one that considers the larger context of development policy as an issue (Beneria, 1995). According to Brydon & Chant (1989), the objective of the GAD approach was to remove gender disparities in social, economic and political sectors, and to create a balance between men and women as a prerequisite for achieving sustainable development. GAD has its roots in feminist anthropology concerned with

cross-cultural and intra-cultural differences, and in socialist feminism where class and gender links are considered, but it has also been influenced by postmodern feminism with its discourse about knowledge, power relations and differences (Jackson & Pearson, 1998). Postmodern feminists criticize the dualistic language of binary oppositions which create women, and in particular Third World women, as the vulnerable “other.” Instead, they advocate for a localized and contextualized examination of women’s concrete and lived experiences in different cultures (Parpart, 1995). Women are not a homogenous group, as is the tendency in the WAD approach on focusing on the general category “women”, but divided by age, class, ethnicity, race, and nationality and so on, according to advocates of GAD (Elson, 1995). Hence, the weakness of WAD in focusing exclusively on women is replaced by the GAD perspective, which puts an emphasis on the totality of the interconnectivity between women’s and men’s lives (Young, 1993).

The GAD approach, therefore, demands a commitment to structural change and power shifts between men and women (Desai & Potter, 2002). Visvanathan et al, (1997) suggest that GAD goes further than both WID and WAD in questioning underlying assumptions of social, economic and political factors in women’s lives. The authors contend that GAD examines the social relationship between men and women, in which women have been subordinated and oppressed, and recognizes that patriarchy and other social structures subordinate women. Gardner and Lewis (1996) also argue that the GAD sees women as agents of change rather than passive recipients of development assistance, and stresses the need for women to organize for a more effective political voice.

House-Midamba & Ekechie (1995) contends that GAD does not focus on either the productive or reproductive aspects of women's (and men's) lives to the exclusion of the other. Rather, according to the authors, it analyzes contributions made both inside and outside the household, including the public/private dichotomy commonly used to undervalue family and household maintenance work performed by women. One of the major benefits of this approach is that it does not assume similarity or homogeneity. Rather, it is based on the fact that planners need to be clear that references to women, rather than gender, do not assume that there is some universal position that all women occupy in all societies (Brydon & Chant, 1989; Agarwal, 1990). It also covers both productive and reproductive roles of women and realizes that the relationship between men and women is crucial in determining the position of both (Ahooja-Patel, 1995).

GAD emphasizes the fact that all development initiatives will affect the lives of both men and women in some way, and as a result consideration should be given to both genders in development planning (Hadad, 1991; Brown & Kerr, 1997). Since the 1980s GAD, which argues that it is inefficient not to recognize and use women's endowments for development, has been very influential in Ghana (Parpart, 1989; Rathgeber, 1992). The approach is responsible for some of the elements of the community development projects, which insist on women's participation and some of the reforms that have occurred under SAP (Brydon & Legge, 1993a; Moser, 1993). Perhaps, the only problem with this type of approach is that its benefits can only be realized in the long term, and this tends to conflict with the business model used by governments and local and international NGOs, which usually seek short-term positive results (Roncoli, 1985; Lorber, 1998). Not

surprisingly a fully articulated GAD perspective is rarely found in the projects and activities of international development agencies, although partial examples can be identified (Club du Sahel, 2000; Gelb, 2001).

In Ghana, some of these concepts and approaches in development have been used and continue to be in vogue. For example, income generation and credit projects have been a favorite prescription for the woes of rural women for decades (Mikell, 1986). The WID approach stems from the assumption that the main problems of Ghanaian rural women are caused by poverty (Bukh, 1979; Lorber, 1999). However, since it takes the issue of unequal gender relations out of the equation, these development projects under WID have not been able to address the problems of sexual division of labor, unpaid work, decision-making and gender inequalities (Norton & Bortei-Doku, 1993).

There are reasons why these approaches have flourished in Ghana in spite of the fact that they have not succeeded in addressing questions of gender inequalities. It is mainly because the approaches address what has come to be described as women's practical needs, which include everyday needs for food, water, clothing and shelter (Haddad, 1991). These are the priority needs of the rural population, which are immediately met by these approaches (Shaw, 1982; Whatmore et al., 1994). Meeting these short term basic needs is in opposition to strategic needs, which requires long-term structural change in the oppressive sexual division of labor (Oakley & Mardsen, 1984). These strategic needs are not the priority needs of the rural Ghanaian population. As a result of these approaches to meet the basic daily needs of the rural population, which is of utmost

importance to them, they have flourished in the society. Williams (1994) argues that without attention to both the basic and strategic needs of Ghanaian women, gender equality will not be achievable (Williams, 1994). The development problems facing Ghana have forced policymakers to prioritize economic development issues to the detriment of gender equity and equality. However, efforts are being made by the government to correct this situation through an attempt to mainstream gender into all sectors of the economy, a process known as gender mainstreaming (World Bank, 1994).

#### 3.5.4 Gender Mainstreaming

The recognition of the need for gender analysis in the development process has led to a further shift in direction, to more advocacy for the integration of gender concerns into the overall planning, programming and budgeting of all sectors and development initiatives (Chao, 1999). This process known as gender mainstreaming, differs from previous efforts to integrate women's concerns into government activities, in that rather than "adding-on" a woman's component to existing policies and programs, a gender perspective informs these activities at all stages, and in every aspect of the decision-making process (Gardner & Lewis, 1996; World Bank, 2000).

Gender mainstreaming involves a process in which both women and men participate fully in the decision-making process (Ghorayshi & Belanger, 1996). It requires an on-going monitoring of the impact of development policies and programs on women and men, and

relies on gender analysis as a tool and analytical framework (AWID, 2002).<sup>55</sup> The practical implementation of gender mainstreaming requires some form of affirmative action or special initiatives in order to promote the advancement of women (Panuccio, 1989). Thus such programs that recognize women as agents of change become necessary as a means of achieving gender equality (World Bank, 2000). Both gender mainstreaming and the advancement of women are complementary and mutually reinforcing.

Mainstreaming a gender perspective into development practice means ensuring that the needs, priorities and interests of women as well as men are considered at all levels and stages of development activities (Jackson & Pearson, 1998; AWID, 2002). Gender mainstreaming is now widely accepted as the most appropriate alternative to the marginalization of women, a problem, which was perpetuated by WID, WAD and GAD approaches (Visvanathan et al, 1997; Desai & Potter, 2002). The responsibility for achieving gender equality must be shared by all actors, that is, men and women, policy analysts, development practitioners, political leaders NGOs and civil society. A Report by the World Bank (2000) agrees with the argument that that gender mainstreaming may entail a fundamental transformation of underlying paradigms that inform development practice.

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<sup>55</sup>Anderson (1991) has shown how the term mainstreaming is used in different ways in the development literature. Increasingly the term is losing its theoretical content. For it to have transformational consequences for gender equality, it must have a political agenda and lead to changes in structures, processes and relationships at all levels. But the tendency has been to apply it as a technical tool.



Although gender relations seem to have become an integral part of the development discourse, feminists and other social science researchers are debating whether gender analysis is truly being translated from theory into practice, or simply being given “lip service” (Yngstrom et al, 1995). Rathgeber (1992:4) argues that “while the rhetoric of integrating women into development has been accepted, the actual process of ensuring gender equity is still far from complete.” This study uses an integrative approach that combines with gender-based analysis for analyzing the literature on migration and rural livelihood. The next section explores policy approaches that developed with the changes in perspectives of women in development.

### **3.6 Policy Approaches to Development**

Desai and Potter (2002) define a policy approach as a way of thinking containing basic theoretical assumptions and concepts, which determine how policy declarations in institutions and organizations are formulated. In general, a policy is made up of a set of rationales, objectives, principles and strategies (Chao, 1999). The policy serves as the main guide for the subsequent implementation of aid activities. It identifies why a development agency is concerned with an issue or a problem, and states what has to be done to resolve it (Moser 1993:43). Five policy approaches are identified in the literature and examined in this section. These are approaches with the goals of welfare, equity, anti-poverty, efficiency and empowerment. The broader approaches of “Women in Development” (WID) and “Gender and Development” (GAD) used to categorise policy discourses, were discussed earlier. WID is mainly associated with the approaches

of equity, anti-poverty and efficiency, and GAD with the empowerment approach (Parpart, 1989; Silberschmidt, 1991).

Three major phases in policy approach can be identified. The oldest welfare approach arose in the 1950s and the 1960s, when women first were recognised in development efforts (Gelb, 2001). This was followed by the response in the 1970s of a number of approaches, categorised together into the WID approach, which in the 1980s and 1990s gradually was replaced by the GAD approach (Desai and Potter, 2002). The welfare approach, originating before the WID era, and the efficiency approach from WID have been named as the two most influential and opposing policy approaches (Kabeer 1994:35). During the 1990s, the empowerment approach was also incorporated into policy thinking. The different policy approaches presented here have dominated, or continue to dominate, during certain times and in certain aid agencies (Smith-Lovin & Macpherson, 1994:192).

New policy approaches have developed out of critiques towards the old ones, and at times development agencies have returned to older approaches (Kabeer 1994). As a result of the shifts and adaptations of the approaches, they have been confused with each other and categorised together (Moser 1989). Therefore, in practice, the policy approaches are not as absolute as described here, and sometimes do overlap and mix with each other.

### 3.6.1 Welfare Approach

The welfare approach has its roots in the nineteenth century notion of social welfare (Gelb, 2001).<sup>56</sup> During this era the poor were viewed as the failures of the system, incapable of improving themselves through their own efforts, and voluntary charity organisations became responsible for assisting them (Kabeer 1994:5). This idea of separating welfare assistance from the main development efforts was common in the colonial times, and was introduced in the 1950s and the 1960s as the development policy directed towards women in developing countries (Snyder & Tadesse 1995). While men were targeted as a productive labour force in the overall objectives of the mainstream modernization model, women were perceived as a vulnerable group and as passive recipients of welfare assistance because of their primary reproductive roles (Moser 1993).

The aim of development assistance, according to this approach, is to “help” women to become better mothers and housewives in order to improve their family’s (particularly children’s) welfare (Buvinic 1983; Kabeer, 1994). Thus interventions in addressing women are projects focused on maternal and child health care, family planning, nutritional training and home economics.

The main critic of the welfare approach is its stereotyped assumptions about women’s domestic role and the division of labour between women and men (Garner & Lewis, 1996). It fails to consider women’s productive activities and their economic

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<sup>56</sup>Brydon and Chant (1989:219-220) also discuss the welfare, anti-poverty and equity approaches to addressing women’s issues. They rightly point out that many of these approaches exploit skills that women already have.

responsibilities, as well as to question or change the role of women, grounded in misperceptions and the Western notion of women's and men's roles (Moser 1993). It is politically unchallenging and safe approach without the potential of causing conflicts between women and men, and between women of different classes (Kabeer, 1994; Snyder & Tadesse, 1995). This top-down approach of welfare tends also to foster dependency rather than self-reliance (Buvinic, 1983). Dissatisfaction with the welfare approach, together with the failure of the "trickle down" approach to development in the developing countries, and the UN-declared Women's Decade from 1976 led to a number of alternative approaches such as the equity approach (Moser, 1989).

### 3.6.2 Equity Approach

Influenced by Ester Boserup's book Women's Role in Economic Development (1970) and Western feminists, the equity approach developed from the concerns of the effects of economic development on the economic status of women in developing countries (Boserup, 1970). The main assumption was that women lose ground relative to men in the development process (; Desai & Potter, 2002). The arguments of this approach are, first, that women have both productive and reproductive roles in society, but the less monetised the economic system, as is the case in developing countries, the more important is their reproductive role (Jackson & Pearson, 1998). Secondly, the conventional, Western measures of economic activity underestimate the value of women's reproductive roles because it is often unpaid work outside the modern sector. Third, development policies in the Third World hinder paid work for women. Fourth,

because of this policy women are left behind in the traditional sector and the income gap between the sexes widens (Udoh, 1995).

According to this approach, the resulting negative impact on equity between women and men can only be solved through redistribution of resources and wealth at all levels from men to women, as well as positive discrimination policies in favour of women (Moser, 1989). Women as participants and contributors to the development process need to be acknowledged and gain access to employment and the marketplace to achieve economic independence, which is viewed as the same as greater equity with men (Buvinic 1983). The equity approach, grounded in the liberal tradition, emphasizes top-down legislation and state interventions to secure women's political and economic autonomy and status (Parpart & Marchant 19995). Through this approach legal rights and human rights for women have subsequently gained worldwide recognition, for example rights of divorce, land ownership, property, credit and voting.

The equity approach encountered many problems and lots of resistance because of its redistributional approach of power to all women (Kabeer, 1994). It proved to be difficult to translate into policy because it was perceived to be threatening to men. It was politically unpopular with most governments because of its likelihood of interfering in the country's culture and traditions. Additionally, it lacks methodological workable indicators for measuring women's status (Moser, 1989). The equity approach's goal of formal equity for women within the development process was criticised, in that it never went beyond the rhetoric, because of the male dominance that is rampant in the

development agencies (Parpart, 1989). Women's emancipation therefore, became restricted to "women's rights" (Mies, 1986).

Formal equity was also associated with laws constructed on the notion of the "sameness" of women and men, where men were deemed to be the norm (Jackson, 1996). Also, the approach was criticised by Third World feminists as reflecting Western feminists' preoccupation with equality, patriarchy, and sexual oppression (Snyder & Tadesse, 1995). According to these scholars, the approach viewed gender as the basic inequality in women's lives, and lacked a serious development perspective. Third World feminists were more concerned with issues of poverty and global inequalities (Gordon, 1996).<sup>57</sup>

### 3.6.3 Anti-poverty Approach

Out of the arising reluctance of the equity approach during the 1970s emerged the less radical anti-poverty approach (Buvinic, 1983). This approach focused on women, and was linked to the growing concern of poverty alleviation and basic needs, as well as economic growth. Women in low-income households, as "the poorest of the poor," were identified as a target group for poverty alleviation (Yngstrom et al. 1995). Also, because they provide almost all their families' basic needs they were targeted in the promotion of economic growth (ILO, 1977; Udoh, 1995).

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<sup>57</sup> For many Third feminists, gender discrimination is not viewed as the sole or even the main source of women's oppression. Third World feminists often see their main struggle as being alongside their men and communities against racism, economic exploitation, and poverty (Gordon, 1996:15). See section 3.8.5.

The underlying assumption of the approach is that the origins of inequality between women and men are associated not only with subordination. The approach emphasizes that inequality is rather associated with poverty, which is underpinned by the lack of access to resources, such as private ownership of land and capital, and to sexual discrimination in the labour market (Moser, 1989). Consequently, the aim of the approach is to increase poor women's productivity through employment and income-generating activities, and at the same time reduce poverty and increase economic growth.

The anti-poverty approach has been criticised for its minimal potential for changing women's position when "defining women's problems in terms of the family's basic needs rather than their unequal access to resources" (Kabeer, 1994:7). The concentration on only poor women rather than all women, is assessed as toning down implications that a gain to women implies a loss to men in development efforts (Buvinic, 1983). Also, the emphasis on "needs" is questioned as a perspective from above, which leaves open the question of who has the right to define those needs? (Fernandez-Kelly, 1991).

The approach's focus on income-generating projects, mostly small-scale, all-women in composition and located near the home, have been criticised as well. The argument put forward is that in the implementation of income-generating projects, women's reproductive work is ignored, and it is assumed that they have free time (Hatcher, 1995). Meanwhile, it is very likely that in fact the income-generating projects rather extend women's working day and increase their workload (Moser, 1989). Moreover, the characteristics of the projects are guided by sex-role stereotype perceptions when

attempting “to increase productivity in activities traditionally undertaken by women, rather than to introduce them to new areas of work” (Snyder & Tadesse 1995:12). Finally, these small-scale projects are marginally and financially weak, with small capacity for generating autonomous growth, and thus are generally unable to reduce poverty and improve the economic livelihood of women.

### 3.6.4 Efficiency Approach

As its label indicates, the efficiency approach is concerned with how Third World women can contribute to increased efficiency and effectiveness in the development process, thus increasing both economic growth and improving the lives of women. The main assumption is that an increase in women’s productive participation is essential to the success of development efforts (Parpart & Marchand, 1995). The shift to the efficiency approach and the increased emphasis on women as economic agents occurred at the same time as the economic crises of the mid 1970s, and the subsequent SAPs designed by the IMF and the World Bank for the developing countries in the 1980s with the main objectives of efficiency and productivity (Moser, 1989).

Policymakers with neo-liberal ideology were responsible for these programmes, which recognised women as underutilized as potential key actors in the endeavour for economic recovery (World Bank, 1994). This approach views the position of women in society as being primarily economical, not an equality issue. The approach focused on self-help components of projects where women as community members take responsibility for the



delivery of different basic services to the community (Smith-Loving & Mcpherson, 1994). The approach has gained popularity both among development agencies and national governments (World Bank, 1994).

There are however some criticisms to this approach. The assumption that the integration of women is crucial to the success of the development process is questioned. This is because the approach does not take into account the fact that development does not necessarily improve economic conditions or increase the status of women (Moser, 1989). Additionally the approach often wrongly associates women's participation with increased gender equality and decision-making power for all women (Mikell, 1997). It is also criticised for neglecting the interconnection between production and reproduction in women's lives (Kabeer, 1994). Additionally, it "relies heavily on the elasticity of women's labour....at the cost of longer working hours and increased unpaid work" (Staudt, 1998). Another critical point raised is that women are not acknowledged or valued as human beings, but as nothing more than facilitators for development by the advocates of the efficiency approach (Jackson, 1998). This instrumental approach viewing women as means for other development goals and not as important people in their own rights is highly disputed.

### 3.6.5 Empowerment Approach

The most recent approach, the empowerment approach, was developed during the 1980s by feminist scholars and activists mainly from the South, and is therefore, in theory,

grounded in Southern realities (Sen & Grown, 1987). The approach has been generated out of a gender and development perspective, which values “bottom-up” and actor-oriented strategies (Udoh, 1995). It recognizes that women experience inequality differently, not only because of gender but also because of factors such as class, race ethnicity, age, colonial and neo-colonial history (Parpart, 1989; Moser, 1989). Oppression of women is also acknowledged to occur at different levels at the same time in the same context. The problem of inequality is therefore, not only about the relationship between women and men, but also about other relationships and structures in society, such as global inequalities between countries in the South and North.

The social institutions and relations which restrain women and embody male bias are, therefore, its concern rather than women as a separate category. Thus the focus is on gender relations and power, and the importance of empowering women, individually and collectively, to take control over their own lives through supporting their own initiatives (Elson, 1995). The assumption is that through empowerment women will achieve greater equality with men. However, the approach seeks to be less threatening than the equity approach and it avoids direct confrontation by identifying power (Desai & Potter, 2000).<sup>58</sup> The means to empower women are political mobilization, consciousness-raising and popular education, as well as income-earning opportunities. The goal of the empowerment approach is to transform both the policy process and the overall design of development strategies ((Twumasi, 1986; Elson, 1995).

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<sup>58</sup> ...less in terms of domination over others and more in terms of the capacity of women to increase their own self-reliance and internal strength. This is identified as the right to determine choices in life and to influence the direction of change, through the ability to gain control over crucial material and nonmaterial resources (Moser, 1989:1815).

Critical voices indicate that the empowerment approach legitimises other policies and approaches which involve women in development efforts (Udoh & Etim, 1999). Jackson (1998) argues that women become the means of controlling population, of achieving sustainable development, of poverty alleviation. The empowerment approach has also been criticised for adopting transformative concepts such as empowerment and gender. The argument is that it uses them in a way whereby they lose their potentially politically challenging content (Snyder & Tadesse 1995). In addition, the idea of women being empowered in the development process can be seen as threatening by men who fear to lose control. As a result, the aspect of women gaining power in comparison to men has been toned down in the approach with the result that it has become a less politically threatening approach.

### **3.7 Comparisons between WID and GAD Approaches**

The key concepts of gender and development and the policy approaches discussed outline different theoretical positions. From the 1970s to the 1990s, both policy and practice have undergone a substantial shift from a WID approach to a GAD approach (Desai & Potter, 2001). The category of “women” has been replaced by the focus on gender. Other new concepts, such as empowerment and mainstreaming, have also evolved (Moser, 1989). The GAD approach (and the empowerment approach) and the related GAD concepts described above are, therefore, in line with the most recent theoretical thinking. As such they also form the theoretical background that this thesis adopts in the analysis and discussion of migration and rural livelihood in Ghana. Thus,

I view gender as a relational concept marked by power, and argue that gender relations, which is evidenced in the distribution of power, resources and privileges underpins migration in Ghana. The study now turns to feminist theories for additional concepts for developing a gender analysis framework for analyzing migration and rural livelihood.

### **3.8 Feminist Perspectives on Migration and Livelihood**

At various periods in history, social issues within mainstream society have been developed and implemented by using a dominant approach that perpetuates the oppressive social structures of race, class and gender (Touwen, 1996).<sup>59</sup> Bearing this reality in mind, the study demands a theoretical approach that promotes the gender analysis of migration and livelihood issues in Ghana (Twumasi-Ankrah, 1995 Skeldon, 1997). Hence, this study employs a feminist theoretical framework in its discussion of rural-urban migration and the experiences of rural Ghanaian women as they confront the daily challenges of their lives (Mikell, 1997).<sup>60</sup> The contemporary feminist theoretical framework can be classified into three strands, namely liberal, socialist and radical (Stanley, 1990). These approaches are closely associated with the perspectives of existing social theories; liberal feminism with functionalism, human capital and modernization theories; socialist feminism with conflict and Marxist theories; and finally radical feminism with liberation theory (Gardner & Lewis, 1996).

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<sup>59</sup> Feminism is a collection of social theories largely concerned with the socio-economic and political equality of the sexes (Collins, 1990). It is based upon the conviction that gendered roles of men and women are social constructed, and that biological sex should not be the determining factor shaping

<sup>60</sup> See Kate Miller (1970) and Firestone (1970) for some of the earliest feminist debates.

The definition of feminism has been broadened in the past century to encompass political, economic, cultural, racial and ethnic dimensions (hooks, 1988; Manuh, 1992). Feminists' perspectives vary regarding the sources of inequality, how to attain equality, and the extent to which gender and gender-based identities should be questioned and critiqued (Collins, 1990). In spite of the differences in definition and focus, feminist theorists share four main general concerns. First, the theorists seek to understand the gendered nature of men and women; second, gender relations are seen as significant problems that are related to all types of inequalities; third, gender relations are perceived as historical and socio-cultural and fourth, all feminist approaches advocate for social change (Maguire, 1987; Marchand & Parpart, 1995).

As a result of the broadening of its definition, other feminist theories such as black feminism and African feminism have also emerged (hooks, 1988; Collins, 1990).<sup>61</sup> This section provides a brief overview of liberal, socialist and radical feminism. It then moves on to discuss Black feminism and the emergence of African feminism, and lastly, it applies African feminism to the Ghanaian context.

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<sup>61</sup> In terms of their orientation, liberal feminism has economic force, radical feminism has ideological force, and socialist feminism is the interconnection between ideological and economic force (Stamp, 1989:146).

### 3.8.1 Liberal Feminism

Liberal feminism is the oldest and probably the most conventional feminist perspective (Collins, 1990).<sup>62</sup> Liberal feminism was most popular in the 1950's and 1960's when many civil rights movements took place during the first wave of feminism (Stamp, 1989). Liberal feminists believe stereotyping and discrimination have created a situation where women have less chance of livelihood and other social dimensions in society (Dagenais & Piche, 1994).<sup>63</sup> The approach, however, prescribes to the belief that women can have the freedom to choose their life course, and an opportunity to achieve their potential within the “patriarchal” capitalist society (Porter & Judd, 1999). It, therefore, advocates equal opportunity and equal rights for women because individual women deserve to benefit from the development process.

The policy implications of this approach include legal reform, women’s political participation, and increases in the enrolment of girls in education (Stamp, 1989). While these actions are useful, they do not question systems of inequality including those of gender relations. Liberal feminism is, therefore, criticized for ignoring patriarchy, power, and the systemic subordination of women as well as the effects of race and class (Porter

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<sup>62</sup> The core beliefs and values of liberal feminists are that they perceive men and women are created equal by God, have essentially the same potential for achievement, and deserve equal rights and opportunities in political, economic and social spheres (Harding, 1987).

<sup>63</sup> Some of the feminists who fall in the category of first wave feminists are Boserup (1970), Rogers (1980) and Tinker (1981).

& Judd, 1999). Highlighting the flaws in liberal feminism, Stamp (1989:15) says that since the approach does not:

.....challenge underlying assumptions regarding the structural causes of gender relations it has proved an unacceptable basis for reform in many developing countries.

In spite of the limitations of liberal feminism, it has paved the way for looking at development in a different way, by taking women into account.

### 3.8.2 Radical Feminism

Radical feminism, which developed in the late 1960s and early 70s was a reaction to the lack of gender analysis within the Marxist tradition (Collins, 1994). But it also developed from a realization that the gains made by liberal feminists in the areas of the law, voting and employment had made little difference to women's oppression (Stamp, 1989). Radical feminism is concerned with male monopolization of culture and knowledge and the sexual politics of everyday life (Harcourt, 1994).<sup>64</sup> Radical feminists advocate that society must look at all social relations defining women's subordinate status, rather than focusing particularly on women as workers (Gordon, 1996).

The approach tends to be skeptical of political action within the current system, and instead, support cultural change that undermines patriarchy and associated hierarchical

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<sup>64</sup>It was the radical feminists who coined the phrase "the personal is political" and were the first to pay particular attention to the oppression that goes on within the home. They tend to be more militant in their approach (radical as "getting to the root") (Stamp 1989:20).

structures. Thus, radical feminism, at the other end of the spectrum, is a philosophy emphasizing the patriarchal roots of inequality between men and women, or, more specifically, social dominance of women by men (Stamp, 1989). However, this approach is found to be limited because it is ahistorical and ethnocentric. In the context of Africa, radical feminism is insufficient in discussing issues of gender and development. As Stamp (1989) asserts, although unsuitable for the African context, the approach has helped us in understanding women's oppression better.

### 3.8.3 Socialist Feminism

Socialist feminism is closely associated with neo-Marxist theory. However Marxist theorists fail to adequately analyze the gender implications of women's oppression (Murray, 1981). These scholars reduce gender relations to relations of production. Thus many areas of women's activity such as reproduction are not discussed (Kabeer, 1994). Socialist feminism on the other hand, poses questions about society and power. These are issues which liberal feminism does not confront.

Socialist feminists believe that there is a direct link between class structure and the oppression of women. The strength of a socialist-feminist perspective is that it incorporates factors of inequality from other feminist theories and builds on the strengths of Marxist theory (Stanley, 1990). It takes the historical and materialist approach of Marxist theory and combines it with radical feminist views about the specific experiences of gender relations. It also draws widely from cross-cultural and historical studies of



liberal feminism, which provide the empirical raw material for a rigorous theorizing of gender relations (Stamp, 1989; Collins, 1990).

One of the important contributions of Socialist feminist analysis is the attempt to explain the nature of women's labour (Harding, 1987). Early attempts by Gray (1982) insisted that housework essentially benefited capitalism and should, therefore, be paid for. These ideas raised consciousness about housework as being social and not natural. This concept could, therefore, be developed adequately to become a site for sustained feminist struggle. The author, however, failed to see the issue in terms of gender. Mbilinyi (1991) argued that women's domestic labour could be understood only in the context of the domestic mode of production in which men controlled and benefited women's labour.

Murray (1981) analyzed the allocation by sex occupations in the labour market. She explains that the capitalist system was inherently exclusionary. As such it marginalizes women and forces them into relations of subordination within the workplace and household. This argument provides a better understanding of how the nature of women's work in the household leads to feminization of their jobs within the labour market. It also explains how women's contributions are persistently less valued than those of their male counterparts.

Many of the arguments of the major feminist perspectives are weak in terms of addressing the issues of female subordination within different socio-economic and cultural contexts (Manuh, 1994; Gordon, 1996). Nevertheless, they provide a useful

framework for the discussion of gender issues (Harcourt, 1994). In the context of Africa, there is a need to examine both productive and reproductive relationships as they change over time within the world economic system. Moser (1993) argues that knowledge of feminist theories is essential in gender and development planning that aspires to achieve gender equality. This is applicable to this study since patriarchy and gender inequalities are prevalent in Ghana, and these issues are inherent in migration. The discussion of the main strands of feminism leads us into an examination of Black and African feminism.

#### 3.8.4 Black Feminism

Black feminism can be defined as a theoretical approach, which allows black women to make sense of the social world in which they interact, from their own unique perspective (bell hooks 1981, 1984; Stanley, 1990). This discourse was pioneered during the first wave of the feminist movement, and resurfaced during the second wave of the movement in the early 1980s, led by bell hooks. It emerged out of the contention that a racist model exists in the main strands of feminism, and that white feminists have simply paid lip service to the anti-racist struggle and in fact, stand as persecutors to black women (hooks, 1988:39). The purpose of black feminism, therefore, was to bring to the forefront, the unique experiences of black women, as opposed to the experiences of white middle class women, thereby highlighting the importance of race and ethnicity (ibid:40).

The black feminist approach has given rise to several black feminist perspectives proposed by black female scholars such as Davis (1983); bell hooks, (1988, 1984, 1983);

and Collins, (1990). These perspectives within black feminism attempt to explain the legacy of inequality that is evident in the social relations of race, class and gender, which is experienced by black women within the socio-economic capitalist systems (Oakley & Mardsen, 1984). Angela Davis (1983:7) posits the “economic exploitation” of black women as the site of exposure to the history of violence, which impacts on issues like socialization of domestic labor, and obstructs the acquisition of formal education, which enhances these women’s chances when entering the work force. Davis contends that the amount of time that both reproductive and productive activities predominated in a black woman’s life was shaped by her socialization. She advocates for a change of the systems that perpetuate these forms of oppression (ibid: 9).

Patricia Collins’ (1991) analysis of black women places their experiences of oppression as originating out of a matrix of domination based on race, class and gender, none of which has primacy over the other. Collins’ analysis of the relationship between black men and women evolves from a conflict between the dominant gender belief in equality, and women’s acquiescence in playing out their expected gender roles in society (Collins, 1991). Bell hooks (1986:17), argues from the perspective of “a liberating radical theory of socialism” which would address all the interlocking systems of sexism, racism, and class imperialism. Hooks believes that dominant feminists in the past have failed to make the connection between race, class and gender (ibid).<sup>65</sup>

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<sup>65</sup> Hooks also articulated the notion of “difference” especially in relation to how black women experience feminism differently. See hooks (1988, 1984, and 1983). Also see McFadden (1984).

Black feminism also consists of gender consciousness and an afro-centric viewpoint. According to Patricia Collins (1990:62), this “afro centric” consciousness permeates the shared history of people of African descent through the framework of “a distinct Afro-centric epistemology.” These two perspectives allow black women to access both points of view, in order to create an alternative epistemology that better reflects and articulates their experiences (ibid:71).

Black feminists assert that the Afro-centric standpoint acknowledges and celebrates the unique values that characterize black society through family structures, religious institutions, culture, and community life (Steady, 1981:93). These values are thus reflected in the ability of black people to survive oppression, and pass down culture and traditions from generation to generation in order to ensure the survival of the group. These core African values are still very much present in black feminist thought processes. Therefore, it is the belief of black feminist theorists that all black people regardless of their geographical location, share a common heritage of oppression and the ability to survive (Collins, 1991:206).

According to Hill (1993), the subordination of black women is thus inherent in a historical system that has forced them to comply with dominant ideologies and philosophies that project images of social and economic systems of inferiority. Black feminism rejects the dominant feminist theories and attempts to offer black women a means of communicating and attaching their own self-defined meanings to the social constructions of race, class, gender and other oppressions (hooks, 1988). Western

feminists argue that gender oppressions transcend divisions among women such as race, social class, religion, sexual orientation and ethnicity, and “form the basis of feminist’s consciousness and epistemology” (Mama, 1991:42). Black feminists, however, assert that this gender definition of oppression is too limited in scope, and does not explain the inherent differences of race and class interactions between black women and white women (ibid:49). A black feminist epistemology, thereby, attempts to respond to the complexities of differential access to resources, opportunities and power experienced by black and white women.

Another perspective in black feminism is the standpoint perspective, which allows women to express their truths based on where they “stand” in the world, looking in (hooks, 1988: 23). Dorothy Smith (1987) a mainstream feminist, argues that the dominant male’s universal application of their ideology and values benefit the ruling class by means of its oppression and domination over the means of production and legally sanctioned authority, which supports this control.<sup>66</sup> Smith maintains that women have historically been excluded from this power and knowledge base (Smith, 1987). The author argues that her contribution to feminist consciousness and theoretical approach is her ability to identify, through her own feminist standpoint, an alternative epistemology that attaches a material and social meaning to a patriarchal source of power (Smith, 1987:14).

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<sup>66</sup> Dorothy Smith (1987) further asserts that this feminist approach allows her as a sociologist to examine the dominant (male) ideology, which projects its images of reality unto others.

Black feminists believe that the source of black women's empowerment is derived from their consciousness in defining their own reality (Steady, 1987; Terborg-Penn et al., 1996). Thornhill (1996) argues that by utilizing a self-defined analysis, black women give credence to their own ways of knowing, which rejects dominant patriarchal ideology that has imposed systems of oppressive structures of race, class, gender to control them. In order for Black women to dismantle these destructive structures, they need to redefine their self worth in terms which challenge a "power over" mentality, by replacing it with a "power within" themselves (Terborg-Penn et al., 1996:112).

This process challenges the chains of domination that still bind black women to a state of helplessness and victim-hood (Steady, 1987; hook, 1988). The black feminist approach provided the insight and understanding of race, class and gender and how these variables impact on the lives of black women in the Diaspora (Harding, 1987). However, it left out a lot of issues that are peculiar to black women living in sub-Saharan Africa. For instance, black feminist perspectives fail to deal with the rural-urban dichotomy and low-high income group disparities, which are very significant in many African countries (Mama, 1992). This obvious limitation in black feminist perspective led to the emergence of African feminism, which speaks more closely to the lived realities of women living in sub-Saharan Africa.

### 3.8.5 African Feminism

African feminists acknowledge the progress of black feminism, but take the analysis further to combine differential social relations of culture, tradition and its practices within their own theoretical framework (Ardayfio-Schandorf & Kwafo-Akoto, 1990).<sup>67</sup> While black feminist thought mainly addresses issues of race, gender and class of black women in the Diaspora, African feminism addresses issues relevant to the situation of African women living on the continent (Oppong, 1987a; Mama, 1992). Black feminism was not addressing issues such as culture and socio-economic problems that are unique to black African women living on the African continent (Mikell, 1997). Due to this gap, African feminists accuse black feminists of using a “white filter” to describe and examine the everyday lives of all black women of African descent (Dolphyne, 1991). African feminism, therefore, calls for the removal of the “white filter” in a constructive way that creates its own definitions of African standards for interpreting cultural values.

From the 1980s to the mid 1990s, much African feminist scholarship defined distinct agendas that were different from the priorities of mainstream western and black feminism (Manuh, 1997; Awumbila, 2001). These differences in issues, led African feminist scholars to focus on the range of discourses and power relations that shape gender and feminism on the African continent (Kerr et al, 2000). Earlier writers like Chikwenye Ogunyemi (1984) and Nawal el Saadawi (1980); and later writers like Patricia McFadden

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<sup>67</sup>For the purposes of this study, an African feminist is defined as a feminist social scientist or researcher who writes about the socio-cultural, economic, political conditions and other issues of concern to African women living on the African continent (Harcourt, 1994). These writers are not necessarily African women scholars, but rather all feminist scholars who have an interest and concern for issues that pertain to African women (Oppong, 1987; Mikell, 1997; Brydon & Chant, 1993).

(1992); Ifi Amadiume & Ruth Meena (1992) (cited in Amina Mama, 1992) transformed the meanings of feminism by examining the particular struggles and goals confronting African women in their battles against the local and global effects of patriarchy and capitalism. Highlighting self-naming as a strategy for defining unique goals and concerns for African women's struggles, theorists like Catherine Acholonu (1995), and Chikweye Ogunnyemi (1984), who coined the term "womanism" and using the rubric of "motherism", offered identities that allowed a number of other African activists and scholars to name and clarify their agendas (Kerr et al, 2000).<sup>68</sup>

It was evident that the concept of culture is central to African feminism (Awumbila & Momsen, 1995). African women are mostly concerned with how to use their culture in positive and assertive ways as they seek solutions to the many problems facing them and their communities (Mikell, 1997). These women, especially rural women, have been trying to find new ways of dealing with issues like unemployment, inadequate infrastructure, female-headed households, droughts, refugee situations, HIV/AIDS, SAPs, human rights abuses, and other severe social problems that confront them on a daily basis (Cole, 1997; Mikell, 1997; Awumbila, 2001). These problems are obviously different from issues that confront African women living in the Diaspora. African feminism, therefore, is an approach that speaks of the cultural experiences of African women and how this impacts their lives (Ewusi, 1978; Ameyibor, 1993). It is said to be the:

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<sup>68</sup> Feminism used to have a negative connotation in Africa, and was therefore avoided by most African female scholars. Today, however, more African women researchers are using the term "feminists" to describe their new mode of operation and their goals for achieving a new gender dimension



“...ideology, which encompasses freedom from oppression based on the political, economic, social and cultural manifestations of racial, cultural, sexual and class biases” (Kerr et al, 2000:64).

African feminism thus addresses most of the main issues faced by African women that have not been a priority for mainstream feminism (Gordon, 1996; Tsikata 2001). For example, western feminism demands an individual and class emancipation, but African feminism is more concerned with the emancipation of all African women, with particular emphasis on culturally linked forms of oppression (Touwen, 1996; Lorber, 1998). African feminists are:

“...pushing women towards a greater boldness in addressing their distinct cultural, economic, social and political elements that determine and affect their experiences and status in society” (Mikell, 1997:5).

These distinct cultural elements provide a symbolic reference point where African women in their struggle can challenge the out-dated aspects of the culture which limit women to particular gender roles (Touwen, 1996). This new brand of feminism therefore, speaks to the needs of African women in ways that allow them to rediscover themselves (Brown & Kerr, 1997; Chao, 1999).

One major point found in this framework that causes some concern is the general impression that all African women have a similar kind of cultural and traditional oppression (House-Midamba & Ekechi, 1995; Gordon, 1996). It is important to mention here that the African continent is not made up of a monolithic group of people. The continent is made up of countries with political, religious and cultural groups with “....distinct differences in the application of basic cultural demands and practices”

(Parpart, 1989:26). In general, each country has specific kinds of cultural and traditional oppression that the women may experience (Manuh, 1984; Dolphyne, 1991). For example a black South African woman's experience of socio-cultural oppression is not the same as that of a black West African woman who has to undergo puberty or widowhood rites.

There are also women in Africa who enjoy privileges and status such as elite women, rich businesswomen and Queen Mothers of various African countries (Mikell, 1997). For these groups of African women, it can be said that they enjoy political and/or social privileges because of their position and the culture and tradition set out in black Africa, which honored their political and social positions as Queen Mothers (Tsikata, 2001). As a result of the marked differences that are evident in the cultural practices across the continent, African women's experiences with gender inequality differ from country to country, and from one community to the other (Steady, 1985; Yngstrom, 1995).

African feminism acknowledges these differences in African culture and values, and their importance to development work (Snyder & Tadesse, 1995). However, in order to establish an all-encompassing theoretical framework, African feminists must challenge the status quo and also lead the debate in the development discourse from various African perspectives (Udoh & Etim, 1999). The study now narrows the discussion on African feminism by applying it to the Ghanaian context.

### 3.8.6 Application of African Feminism to the Ghanaian Context

Feminist activism in Ghana is still shrouded within various organizational initiatives that suffer from a lack of co-ordination and financial resources. A feminist movement per se, is yet to emerge publicly in Ghana (Tsikata, 2001). But, at present, addressing the more explicit gender imbalances and meeting basic and strategic needs such as the need for education, legal rights, and equal access to resources are common causes that Ghanaian women are fighting (Ardayfio-Schandorf, 1994). Gender equality in Ghana is a central and challenging development issue, and hence a development objective in its own right (Brown & Kerr, 1997). The African feminist approach, therefore, helps us to better understand the lived realities of rural women in Ghana.

Gender disparities and gender inequalities remain widespread and hinder Ghanaian women from obtaining access and control of resources; they have limited participation in economic activities; and in having a political voice as a collective (Ardayfio-Schandorf, 1994). As Bukh (1979:14) describes it, “the lack of active and progressive economic development at the rural level have shown that rural people, particularly women, do not have adequate basic necessities of life, such as food, shelter, health care facilities and education.” This problem still persists today more than three decades after Bukh undertook her survey in Ghana. This is evidenced in the writings of Kerr et al, (2000), who found that despite Ghanaian women’s involvement in central aspects of production, patriarchal ideologies ensure their subordination in the society.

National studies undertaken by the FAO of the SSA region in the early 1980s, found that “at the rural level, women in SSA are the main sources of labor” (FAO, 2000:17). Yet, in spite of this reality, it is apparent that African women are not integrated as partners in the planning, programming, implementation and management of rural development projects.<sup>69</sup> The FAO report found that government interventions did little to address the plight of rural African women. This situation arose because the agricultural sector in which women are predominant, is neglected in most African countries (ibid:19).

Although Ghana has made some progress towards achieving development in some areas of the society and the economy in the last two decades, gender inequalities continue to limit women’s capabilities and constrain their ability to participate fully in development and thereby contribute more effectively to the economy (Twumasi, 1993; Brown & Kerr, 1997). The lack of active economic development at the rural level and the inadequacy of agricultural incomes have meant that rural people cannot fend for themselves appropriately in terms of producing adequate food supplies, education and proper health care facilities (Ewusi, 1987; Toulmin, 2000). As a result this socio-economic inadequacy, some people migrate to the urban centers in search of employment. The rural environment of Ghana, therefore, provides a unique opportunity for a combined integrated approach and gender analysis to the analysis of migration and rural livelihood.

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<sup>69</sup> Anderson (1991) has shown how the term mainstreaming is used in different ways in the development literature. Increasingly the term is losing its theoretical content. For it to have transformational consequences for gender equality, it must have a political agenda and lead to changes in structures, processes and relationships at all levels. But the tendency has been to apply it as a technical tool.

The facts of the Ghanaian situation are even more striking when compared with other parts of the developing world. It is true that gender inequalities exist and vary considerably across African countries, as does the pace of development on the continent (Mikell, 1997). And, it is also arguable that there is no region in the developing world where women experience equality with men in economic, social and legal rights. However, the literature reveals that the countries in sub-Saharan Africa have the worst gender disparities globally (Oppong, 1987a; Touwen, 1996; Udoh & Etim, 1999).

### **3.9 Conclusion**

It can be seen from the discussions that gender has made long strides within the development discourse, and subsequently in the migration literature. The work of gender advocates and feminist scholars has helped to keep gender issues alive in the development agenda in some form or other since the 1970s (Mies, 1999). The critique of the dominant development theories led to changes in the ideological climate of development. Greater attention began to be focused on bringing about sustained improvements in the well-being of the individual, and benefits to all (Chowdry, 1995).

This change in perspective is reflected in the corresponding change in the concepts used by feminist scholars in gender analysis, which has gradually impacted the thinking and practice of development and migration issues over the last three decades (Brown & Kerr, 1997). Underlying all these categories is the need to challenge dominant notions of women's position in society with a view to improving their circumstances in relation to

men (hook, 1988). This can be achieved through an integrative approach that combines feminist theories and gender analysis to uncover gender differences with respect to the effect of migration on rural households. Knowledge of these dynamics is essential for understanding rural-urban migration in Ghana. The next chapter presents the methodological and contextual issues of the research.

## CHAPTER 4

### CONTEXTUAL AND METHODOLOGICAL ISSUES

#### 4.1 Introduction

This chapter is designed to discuss data collection, data analysis and interpretations that were carried out throughout the research process.<sup>70</sup> In the first section, the chapter reflects upon the researcher's initial concerns about developing an appropriate and ethically sound research methodology for the field work. The second section of the chapter constructs the field research process, highlighting the approach and methods used. These include an understanding of the context of the study; deciding on the sources of data, and refining the study instruments to ensure that the questions posed addressed the research goal and objectives.

The chapter also explains the procedures used in analyzing the field data, the ethical issues and practical challenges of the research process, and how the researcher came to terms with them. The remainder of the chapter explores the research process, reflecting upon the conceptual and methodological challenges encountered in the field, the researcher's responses to them, as well as the insights gained from these experiences.

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<sup>70</sup> A research method is defined in this study as the means by which knowledge is acquired and constructed within a discipline (Maguire, 1987:14).

This discussion is meant to provide an enhanced understanding of the context within which the field research was conducted in collaboration with rural households in Abutia.

Field research is not simply the process of collecting, analyzing and interpreting data and producing written accounts detailing conclusions and recommendations drawn from the data. Rather, the process of fieldwork is intentional and bi-directional as it entails a process of social interaction and exchange between the researcher and participants, with each bringing their own subjectivities, expectations and intentions to the research (Patton, 2002). Both researchers and participants perceive and expect different things from the research relationship, and both have their unique ways of guiding, manipulating and transforming the research process (Maguire, 1987). Research knowledge, which is generated then, is the product of these social and interpretative negotiations between individuals who bring different experiences, interest and agendas to bear. It is how I applied these principles to my field research that I now focus this discussion on.

## **4.2 Levels of Investigation**

The inclusion of gender in the migration and livelihood discourse has been a slow process, fueled mostly by feminist scholars who have been pushing the issue. As a result of their efforts, there is now a small but growing body of literature addressing how gender relations affect migration (Brydon & Chant, 1989; Francis, 2000).<sup>71</sup> In many case studies, men are still seen to make autonomous decisions while women are seen to

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<sup>71</sup> See Staudt (1991) and Moser (1993) for a discussion of some of these issues from a gender perspective.



migrate as part of family strategies where they are not fully in control (Hugo 1995). Although this situation is changing and more women are migrating independently for economic reasons, the literature is not yet comprehensive on the knowledge that gender influences the migration decision and consequences.

It is important to consider gender in any analysis of migration and livelihood, because this comprehensive and holistic approach is likely to provide more understanding of the consequences of migration in a wider sense (Bilsborrow, 1993:150). This process, however, must take into account the subtle, as well as the obvious forces that coalesce to create different experiences all along the migration spectrum.

### **4.3 Selecting the Research Communities**

The research used purposive sampling in selecting the research locations. Purposeful sampling is a criterion-based selection in which particular settings, persons, or events and area are selected deliberately in order to provide important information for the researcher (Patton, 2002:46).<sup>72</sup> First of all, the Volta region was suggested for fieldwork because the Ewes are known as exporters of educated and uneducated manpower, dating back to pre-colonial times (Kuenyehia, 1998). Additionally, the region is one of the most economically deprived regions in the country, both in natural resources and infrastructure (GSS, 1999). This situation, coupled with the patriarchal lineage system of the area, affects women's position in the household and their access to resources. This creates a

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<sup>72</sup>According to Patton (2002:46), the logic and power of purposeful sampling lie in selecting information-rich cases for study in depth.

vulnerable socio-economic position for women in the villages, which is further affected by rural-urban migration.

The three villages of Abutia Teti, Agorve and Kloe in the Ho district were selected because they have specific characteristics that were important to the research. The basic requirement for selecting a research community was that the community would have a relatively large sample population and diverse migrant households. Collectively, the Abutia villages have a relatively large population sample and are also noted to have long established migration patterns. It is easy to find migrant households in the villages, with migrants spanning two generations living in Accra, Hohoe, and Kpandu. There is also a large Abutia migrant association in Accra, which serves as a testimony to the level of migration from the area. Additionally, there are seasonal migrants who travel to Twifo-Praso, a prominent cocoa growing area in the Ashanti region.

Some research has been conducted in the Ho district by scholars such as Brydon, (1987), Verdon (1986), Bukh (1979), and Kaufert (1976), pertaining to issues such as social organization, household division of labour, and women's productive and reproductive roles in agriculture.<sup>73</sup> These researches, however, were conducted about twenty to thirty years ago. No empirical research has been conducted since the 90s. This situation has created a gap in research in the area. Pertaining to research on rural-urban migration, Lynne Brydon in her study in 1987, indicated that the specific experiences of women and men pertaining to rural-urban migration at the household level in the district needed further investigation. However, very limited further studies have been undertaken in

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<sup>73</sup> Refer to section 1.6 for detailed discussion on the works of these scholars.

recent years to assess the impact of rural-urban migration on livelihood in the Ho district. Furthermore, there is limited analysis of the gender implications of migration on the livelihood of rural agricultural households (Chant, 1992).

This situation suggests that while migration has received generally considerable attention, the situation pertaining to the Ho district has been largely neglected. As such, although the magnitude of rural-urban migration from the district is known to be high, it has not been adequately explored. It is therefore important to undertake gender analysis of migration in the district in order to gather empirical evidence regarding the current migration trends. This knowledge will enable policy-makers and other stakeholders to respond appropriately to gender-specific policy objectives.

#### **4.4 Preparations for Research**

Prior to my departure for the research field, preliminary preparations were undertaken to ensure that the field work would proceed successfully. I spent a few months designing the questionnaires and guides for the semi-structured interviews as well as the focus group discussions. I developed a work plan and a time-table of how we would proceed with the research. I also made arrangements for recruiting research assistants from the University of Ghana, as well as logistical arrangements for office space, accommodation and transportation. Before finally moving into the field, I ensured that instruments and other interviewing materials and logistics for the field work were ready. Thus having completed the necessary preparations, I went to Ghana in October 2005.



PLATE 4.1 Training of Research Assistants.

#### 4.5 Recruitment and Training of Research Assistants

The research team consisted of me, as the principal researcher, two research assistants (RAs) and a community guide. These individuals were recruited to facilitate the process of data collection. All members of the research team consisting of two women and two men spoke *Ewe-dome*, the local language of the research community, very fluently. This prerequisite was essential since the research would be conducted in the local language. The research assistants, consisting of a young man and woman, were post-graduate students of sociology in the University of Ghana, Legon, who had experience with research in the Ho district. They demonstrated an understanding of gender analysis and

the methodological approaches the research team was using. It was evident that the assistants took a professional attitude towards the research.

After the recruitment, we organized training, which consisted of a three-day intensive session on the administration of survey questionnaire, interviewing techniques, facilitation of focus group discussions, recording of notes and note-taking. The training sessions enabled us to discuss our previous research experiences and knowledge, to ensure that the information is relevant to the context of the current research. The questionnaires which were written in English were thoroughly reviewed to ensure that the written English could be easily translated into *Ewe-dome*, the local language, for the interviews.<sup>74</sup> Role-plays in both *Ewe-dome* and English were carried out where each field worker had a chance to conduct interviews as well as record responses.

Other areas we covered in the training included effective participant observation, transcribing recorded notes and maintaining daily journals. For example, research assistants were informed that short hand notes were not acceptable. Additionally, they had to keep journals to write down their research experiences at the end of each day. We also reviewed the overall expectations and general principles guiding the field work. For instance, each research assistant was expected to fill in the responses of interviews to every interview question whilst on the field. They were also expected to complete 5-6 questionnaires at the end of each day. The study instruments were pre-tested or piloted, and we incorporated suggestions that we received in revising the instruments. The final

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<sup>74</sup>The questionnaires, semi-structured interview guides and FGDs guides have been attached to the thesis as appendices.

questionnaires and interview guides were then re-piloted before the fieldwork itself began.

#### **4.6 Process of Selecting Research Participants**

I conducted the research using a combination of purposive and snowball selection processes to select migrant households as well as the respondents. I used the term a “selection process” rather than a sample because no data exists on the total population of most small villages in the district, including our research communities. Without information on the total population size, we could not determine a sample frame on which to base our sample size. Our only option was to determine the size of the research population using basic arithmetic, which combined purposive and snowball selection or sampling techniques.

In purposive sampling, “the sample units are chosen because they have particular features or characteristics which will enable detailed exploration and understanding of the central themes and puzzles which the researcher wishes to study” (Maguire, 1987). The major advantage of purposive sampling is that the researcher employs predefined selection criteria and an estimate of his/her envisaged sample size. This process permits a speedy collection of research data.

Snowball sampling can also be defined generally as a technique used for finding research subjects. According to Patton (2002), the term snowball describes using one contact to

help you recruit another contact who in turn can put the researcher in touch with someone else. The initial contact may be a friend, relative, neighbour or someone from a social group or formal organization. As the term implies, through this method, recruiting gains momentum or “snowballs” as the researcher builds up layers of contacts.

Through the process of snowballing, our research team members asked the interviewees to identify other possible respondents who, either met the theoretical gap needs or met the research characteristics, which required further exploration. For example, when we interviewed a participant from a migrant household, we asked this participant whether s/he knew of anyone else with a similar experience. This participant's recommendation led to the addition of another research participant from a migrant household. This approach was particularly useful, given the lack of communication facilities in the socio-cultural context in which we conducted the research. The initial selection of participants was done through a referral from contact persons and pre-established social networks who come from Abutia Kloe but live in Accra. Subsequent selection was done as the villagers recommended other migrant household members as research participants.

The initial plan was to undertake research involving about 300 migrant households within the three village communities. However, this was not feasible because the population of the villages turned out to be relatively smaller than I had anticipated, particularly Abutia Agorve, which is the smallest of the three villages. Some modifications were, therefore, made to the population sample, which resulted in the research team conducting a survey and interviews for a total of 107 households in the three villages. We selected

households to reflect a diversity of migration experiences within the communities by gender, class and age. We also ensured that both male and female-headed households as well as households of various compositions were represented.



PLATE 4.2 Abutia Teti. A cross section of a Women's Meeting organized by the queen mother of the village.<sup>75</sup>

## 4.7 Community Entry and Interaction

The entry into the Abutia communities started with a referral from contact persons who come from Abutia Kloe. These are educated migrants who live and work in Accra, but maintained contact with their families in the village.<sup>76</sup> After weeks of numerous telephone calls upon my arrival in Ghana, I was finally able to establish contact with a childhood friend whose two best friends come from the Dake and Amoah families of

<sup>75</sup>The queen mother is the highest female traditional authority in the village. See chapter 6 for more details.

<sup>76</sup> Researchers need the 'right' informants in an appropriate number so that they can complete their study within the planned time frame and also get reliable information (Patton, 2002:67).



Abutia Kloe.<sup>77</sup> These are two well-respected families in Abutia Kloe. It was through this social network of friendship that I was able to “gain entry” into the Abutia communities. We had a meeting in Accra and discussed my study, the purpose of the study, and also chatted about the life experience in the Diaspora. After these discussions they gave me other contacts both in the village and in the city.

After having gained access to contacts in the villages, we also needed to gain the trust of the villagers in order to undertake the research. It was important for us to become acquainted with at least one influential member or “gatekeeper” who lives in one of the villages, who could serve as our initial contact person.<sup>78</sup> In order to assist us, our contacts in Accra introduced us to a few members of their families in Abutia who are well-respected community leaders and “gatekeepers.” These people in turn introduced us to community leaders. Establishing contact with members of the two prominent families in Abutia Kloe and being introduced to the villagers as their guests, made our entry into all the three Abutia villages relatively easy. I took the process of community entry very serious because I was cognizant of the fact that as members of the research team, we were not part of the Abutia communities, and would, therefore, be considered as

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<sup>77</sup> The two people who assisted the research team were Mr. Worlanyo Amoah, who has an MBA from Yale University and works with the Ghana Treasury Board in Accra. We learnt that his late father worked with the United Nations for many years and was instrumental in establishing the schools in the Abutia Kloe. The other contact, Mr. Charles Dake, is a manager at Dannex, a pharmaceutical company in Accra. We were informed that Mr. Dake’s father established the Health Clinic in Kloe and was also instrumental in setting up the only Secondary Technical School located at Agorve. Although both fathers have since passed away, they are still remembered for their contributions to the villages.

<sup>78</sup> See section 4.6 for a detailed discussion on the process of establishing contacts with friends and subsequently, community members in the villages.

“outsiders.”<sup>79</sup> As a result of our perceived “outsider” status, I felt that accessing pre-existing social networks as a means of introducing the team was the smoothest means of entry into the community.

I encountered a few challenges at this stage, the main one being peoples’ “relaxed” attitude about time-keeping. For example, I arranged a meeting with a community leader and drove from Accra to Abutia, a journey of two hours, only to be told that the individual had travelled out of the region, and would be away for a few days. He had my telephone number but did not find it necessary to contact me. However, as a researcher I had to be patient and so adapted a flexible attitude, which served me well during such frustrating moments. Finally, we met with this community leader, and he introduced us to other community leaders and arranged meetings for us with the chiefs and elders of the three villages. His support was worth the wait.

The community gatekeeper arranged our first meeting with the community leaders in the three villages. These people served as our first point of contact and later on arranged for us to meet with the chiefs and elders of the villages. During this initial meeting, we were given the opportunity to meet with the community leaders, to explain the purpose and objectives of the research. The research team was well received by the community leaders in the three villages. After this introductory meeting an appointment was made

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<sup>79</sup>I was cognizant of the fact that although I am a Ghanaian and can speak the local language reasonably well, I do not come from the Ho district or the research communities, and was therefore considered an “outsider” by the villagers.

for us to have a formal meeting with the paramount chief who lives in Abutia Teti, as well as the sub-chief and regent of the other two villages.<sup>80</sup>

Arranging to meet with the chiefs was the single most important community entry procedure. This is because Chiefs are the highest level of traditional authority in Ghana, and Abutia is not an exception. They play a predominant role, in community affairs and give approval, refusal and sanctions on community matters, particularly in rural development. The traditional authorities also administer stool lands, administer traditional courts and arrange the celebration of traditional festivals (Dzobo, 1975).<sup>81</sup> Obtaining permission from the chiefs was a pre-requisite for us to conduct the research in their villages. As a result, it was imperative for us to have a meeting with the chiefs and elders of the villages and obtain their permission to undertake the research in their communities.<sup>82</sup>

We also had to respect and observe the hierarchical customary protocol of chiefs by visiting the highest first to the lowest chief. Since the paramount seat of the Abutia traditional area is located at Teti, our first meeting, therefore, was with the paramount chief of the Abutia traditional area, Togbe Abutia Kodzo XIV of Teti. This was

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<sup>80</sup> A regent is an elderly male who represents the chief during any period of his absence from the village.

<sup>81</sup> The chiefs serve as a link between the villages and the government, particularly the district assembly. They are all men with the exception of one Queen mother. See discussions in chapt 6.8.

<sup>82</sup> In Ghana, culture demands that one presents at least two bottles of alcoholic beverages such as schnapps or gin to the chief during a visit, as a sign of courtesy. We presented these drinks at each meeting we had with the chiefs and elders of the three villages.

followed by a meeting with the regent and elders of Agorve.<sup>83</sup> The last meeting was at Kloe, where we met with the chief, Togbe Ayikpe IV and his council of elders.

The procedure of meetings in all the three villages was the same. We presented drinks to the chief, usually two bottles of alcoholic beverage. After the presentation of drinks, we exchanged greetings, and discussed the purpose of our visit and the objectives of the research. This usually developed into a lively discussion of other pertinent issues in the villages pertaining to migration and livelihood. Discussions focused on the migration of men and women, the changes it brings to bear on gender division of labour, including feminization of agriculture and an increase in women's workload. With a great deal of insight, the chiefs and elders presented a detailed portrait of the socio-economic situation in the Abutia villages. They argued that the lack of jobs and poverty in the villages is the predominant reason young people migrate from the villages. They also expressed frustration at the ever-present poverty in the villages.

There were some differences in opinion as some elders indicated that migration increased the responsibilities of women. Some of them acknowledged the changing roles in households and indicated that migration has increased the burden of women both in the home and on the farms. Others were of the opinion that women were simply performing their traditional roles, and that nothing has really changed. Other elders felt that women left behind have a greater role in household decision-making, and that migration rather resulted in greater interdependence with the extended family. It was obvious that the

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<sup>83</sup>The chief of Agorve is a migrant and lives with his family in Accra, but has a regent, an uncle, who oversees the affairs of the village in his absence. The regent being the chief's representative, did not use a linguist, but communicated with us directly.

chiefs and elders were knowledgeable about the issues that affect their communities. We noticed that the female elders, usually one or two, were equally outspoken and were not intimidated by the presence of the men.<sup>84</sup> The meetings were useful as the elders expressed their opinions concerning the socio-cultural and political issues in the villages, which provided us an insight into the village structure.

The chiefs and elders wanted to know whether the research will yield some development benefits for the villages. As a researcher, it was important for me to be honest about my ability or inability to meet these demands. I explained that I am a student and was doing the research for my PhD dissertation, and informed them explicitly that I was not in a position to offer them any development benefits. Nonetheless, I felt powerless listening to the wishes of the chiefs. If I had more time, I would have presented these demands to a few development agencies. However my stay in Ghana was almost at an end so I could not do much to assist them. Additionally, I made a commitment to provide some incentives to the research participants in appreciation of their time and effort. Although I emphasized that the research was only for a dissertation, the chiefs and elders expressed hope that policy makers would be impressed with the findings of the study enough to assist the villages with basic infrastructure such as water and sanitation.

We also had a meeting with Mr. Agyeman, a retired Director of Education, who suggested that it was essential to have a member of the village on our team in order to

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<sup>84</sup>The research team received information about previous researchers who came into the village, promised to offer them some compensation and got the cooperation of the villagers, left without giving anything back and never returned to the village. This negative situation explained the villagers' initial attitude of scepticism and reluctance to cooperate with us.

elicit the trust of community members. He suggested the name of Mr. Edem Senaya, a well-respected community leader and president of the Bee-Keepers Association of Abutia, who I recruited as our community guide.<sup>85</sup> Mr. Senaya introduced us to household members during the research. He also assisted with some translation or prompting during the in-depth interviews and focus group discussions. The presence of Mr. Senaya on our research team created credibility and elicited the participation of community members because during the initial phase of the study, we realized that people were more open and welcoming whenever he accompanied the research team.<sup>86</sup>

After having received the approval of the chiefs and elders of the three villages, we lived among the villagers, in Abutia Kloe, in order to immerse ourselves in the life of the villages. Since the research team consisted of a small group of people, being together helped us develop our own team dynamics. The research team adopted a flexible mindset and approach, and this was very essential in making the research successful. For example, prior to the trip to Ghana, I thought it would be more feasible to administer all the study instruments simultaneously in one village before moving to the next village. However, being on the ground, it became clear that it was more feasible to complete one research instrument in all three villages before moving on to the next research instrument. We, therefore, adopted the latter approach. The research team administered the questionnaire survey in Teti, continued to Agorve, and completed it in Kloe. The in-

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<sup>85</sup> Sadly, Mr. Edem Senaya had since passed away.

<sup>86</sup> Most people referred to us as Efo Edem's guests. In the rural areas, people feel obligated to welcome guests so the linkage we had to him as "his guests" gave us more community acceptance and encouraged participation in the research.

depth interview and focus group discussions followed the same pattern. This method was more efficient, as it enabled the research team to remain focused on the research method that was being administered at a particular point in time.

Since the research was for six months, I was concerned about “research fatigue” on the part of the villagers. I felt they might get tired of seeing us around all the time and might want their space. As a result I made an arrangement whereby we stayed in the village and worked from Monday to Friday, and returned to Ho each weekend.<sup>87</sup> This arrangement provided both the research team and villagers a break from the research process. We purchased six boxes of 500 grams sachets powdered soap called Yazz. In recognition and appreciation of the time and effort that research participants put into answering our long questionnaire and participating in the in-depth interviews, we gave each participant two sachets of soap after each interview. We also provided participants with refreshment such as fanta, coca cola and biscuits during the focus groups discussions.

#### **4.8 Administering the Research Instruments**

In order for the study to address the research problem in the most comprehensive way, the study was organized into four methodological components involving a questionnaire survey, in-depth interview, focus group discussions and participant observation. The method was organized in a complementary fashion, with findings of each method

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<sup>87</sup> Ho, the district capital is about 25 minutes drive from the research communities.

informing the process and progress of the others. Due to the large number of migrant households in the village, we got a relatively large sample of migrant households to interview. One advantage of rural households is that there is always somebody at home, especially elderly heads of households. This made it convenient for us to interview household members at any time of day.



PLATE 4.3 Abutia Agorve. Research assistant administering a questionnaire survey to women as they prepared palm nuts for sale.<sup>88</sup>

#### 4.8.1 Questionnaire Survey

The first component of the field research was the administration of a questionnaire survey in the three villages. The questionnaires consisted of 70 questions, which were structured

<sup>88</sup> Palm nuts are harvested from the palm tree. The fruit is used in making soup. These women head load it on a tray and sell it by walking through the community with it.



to quantify the background information of households, and some of the issues concerning rural-urban migration and rural livelihood.<sup>89</sup> We respected the respondents as the “experts” on their own lives and views. The research team maintained a level of flexibility, in that some aspects of the questionnaire were left open-ended for the interviewer to amend or rephrase the questions to suit the specific context of each household surveyed. While we stressed the need for accurate recording of information, we also put emphasis on the complete disclosure of our research aims to the households in a suitable manner that is both culturally acceptable and respectful. For example, it was important to greet people every time we met them, and it was particularly important to greet and ask of the health of household members before starting the research. As principal researcher, I maintained a log of the number of completed questionnaires received from interviewers each day. This helped to prevent loss of questionnaires, and was also useful in checking interviewer productivity.

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<sup>89</sup> A questionnaire is a group or sequence of questions designed to elicit information from an informant or respondent when asked by an interviewer or completed unaided by the respondent. The strength of the questionnaire is its ability to obtain detailed information on quantifiable topics.



PLATE 4.4 Abutia Kloe. Research assistant conducting a semi- structured interview. The head of household, a widower<sup>90</sup> assists with preparing the harvested maize for storage.

#### 4.8.2 Semi-Structured Interviews

The research team conducted semi-structured interviews to complement the questionnaire surveys and to deepen the research results.<sup>91</sup> Generally, qualitative interviewing is defined as a kind of guided conversation in which the researcher carefully listens to the respondent ‘so as to hear the meaning’ of what is being conveyed. According to Patton (2002), the process allows the researcher to produce a rich, in-depth and varied data set in an informal setting. It provides a thorough examination of experiences, feelings or opinions that closed questions could never hope to capture (Ibid). For example, the

<sup>90</sup> The widow shares the household with his daughter and son in- law who take care of him, the wife of his migrant son, and two members of the extended family.

<sup>91</sup> An in-depth interview is a dialogue between a skilled interviewer and an interviewee. Its goal is to elicit rich, detailed material that can be used in analysis.

semi-structured interviews enabled women to express their opinions concerning the division of labour in the household. Some of them informed us that male migration has increased the time they spend on the farm, thereby reducing the time they spend on petty trading. Bearing in mind that the in-depth interviews would take much more time, we interviewed a smaller sample of people. The research team ensured that those selected for the interviews were well-informed about the issues being researched, to enable them provide relevant information.

For each household, we interviewed the male and/or female adults where both were present. These were people who identified themselves in household surveys as the “heads” and/or spouse of the head of the family or household.<sup>92</sup> Though we requested to speak with each person privately, in a few cases the women’s husbands stayed in the first interview. We found out that female respondents were eloquent even in the presence of their spouses. The difference was that their presentation was more lenient, when male spouses were present. For instance, during discussions on the division of labour, most women indicated financial expenditure such as children’s school fees and health care as being the man’s responsibility. However, whenever the man was present, the women added that they also had the obligation to assist the men financially. In most cases, however, we were able to interview the woman alone. During these interviews we gained an understanding of household gender dynamics and intra-household negotiations.

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<sup>92</sup>In Abutia the head of household is usually the elderly male adult, who is referred to as the “afe tator.” The head of household has the responsibility of making all the major decisions that affect members of his household. He can be assisted by the most elderly woman in the household, but his authority tends to be delegated to the first born male due to the patriarchal lineage of the Ewes. The predominance of male-headed household is however changing with the increase in female-headed households.

Each interview was conducted using an interview guide that listed the main topics and sub-topics to be explored. The guide was designed in such a way that similar types of information would be elicited from all respondents. Rather than imposing a standard structure and a set of questions on each participant, the interview process was flexible and open-ended. The flexible guide, therefore, helped the team pace the interview and made the interview process more systematic and comprehensive. We encouraged participants to express themselves in as much detail as they wished, and to discuss issues that they felt were of greatest relevance and interest to them. Overall, the issues explored included participants' daily activities both in the household and on the farm, their role in income-generating activities and relative responsibility for household expenditure.

Some women indicated that they work long hours but their labour is not recognized. They narrated that starting in the pre-dawn hours they walk long distances to the nearest water supply, cook breakfast, prepare the children to school and then go to the farm. They return from the farm late only to work at home again. Others expressed the wish to have male household members help them more at home and on the farm. The team placed particular emphasis on discussing the gender division of labour by task, and the determinants and consequences of migration on the households and women's livelihood. Most of the women indicated that the migration of their spouses and other household members into the city has increased their responsibilities both at home and on the farm.

The following is a discussion that occurred during one of the semi-structured interviews.

**T: Tell us about how you and your wife work on the farm.**<sup>93</sup>

**H:** Sometimes we go to the farm together. At other times I get there earlier than her. I usually do all the hard work like cutting down the large trees or branches of trees and cutting the difficult bushes.

**W:** My work starts very early in the morning about 5am when I wake up and go to the stream to fetch water. When day breaks, I sweep the compound, cook breakfast, and prepare the children for school before going to the farm.

**T: Does your husband have breakfast before leaving for the farm?**

**W:** Sometimes. But when he does not eat, then I take his breakfast and midday meal to him.

**T: What work do you do when you get to the farm?**

**W:** If its early farm season, my husband clears the big bushes with cutlass and I weed with the hoe. I then sow the seeds or plants. If the crops have already been sown, then I weed around them. When the day's work is done, I gather fuel wood and some vegetables or root crops to send home.

**H:** Well, in my case men are not supposed to carry the flat pan on their heads. It is culturally forbidden, a taboo. So it's the women's responsibility to carry the items home. But if there are some bush rats on the farm, I kill and carry them home.

**T: What happens when you get home?**

**W:** I wash my hands and feet and start preparing the evening meal.

**H:** I bath and visit friends or sometimes they come to visit. Sometimes we go for a drink. Other times we sit and chat and make plans for the family. You see, cooking is a woman's job so I cannot help my wife. People in the village will laugh at me if they see me doing that (laughter). Women are supposed to take care of their husbands and children by cooking and assisting the husbands on the farms. That is the woman's responsibility. They are only doing their job just like we also do ours. We even do more but we never complain. I hope you understand me? Yes, that is how it works everywhere in this country.

It was evident from the discussions that men recognize the responsibilities of women.

However, they feel that the responsibilities of men and women complement each other,

and that women do not perform more tasks than men. According to some male

respondents, "women simply do what is expected of them as women, wives and mothers." During the interviews, we asked the questions in a conversational manner and

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<sup>93</sup> T= Researcher; H= Husband; W= Wife

allowed the respondents to express their opinions. We adopted this approach because we considered the villagers the experts on the issues being discussed because these issues concerned their daily lives. We did not lead the participants according to any preconceived notions, nor did we encourage them to provide particular answers by expressing approval or disapproval of any opinion. All interviews were audio-taped, which were then transcribed by the research assistants and reviewed by the principal researcher. The transcripts and notes taken during the interviews enabled us to examine the issues discussed, and to identify areas of inquiry, which were further explored in focus group discussions.<sup>94</sup>

Conducting the semi-structured interviews was a rewarding experience both for the research team and the villagers. For the people of Abutia, some respondents stated that the experience offered them the opportunity to share their life experiences with us. Sharing their concerns and coming up with solutions served as a form of personal empowerment for the villagers. For the research team, the interviews gave us an understanding of the challenges that confront rural women and their households.<sup>95</sup> The

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<sup>94</sup>The research team also took short notes, and drew on memory to expand and clarify the notes immediately after the interview. We made notes of facial expressions, changes in moods, gestures and body language of the participants as they occurred during the course of the interview.

<sup>95</sup> During these interviews, various topics regarding women's livelihood, personal opinions about rural-urban migration, consequences on the household and problems associated were covered.

interview process, therefore, provided an opportunity for the research team to gain insight into how the people of Abutia interpret and order their world.



PLATE 4.5 Participants at Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) at Abutia Kloe. (They were served refreshments such as fanta, coca cola and biscuits).

#### 4.8.3 Focus Group Discussions (FGDs)

The research team also organized focus group discussions in each of the three villages to complement data from the survey questionnaire and semi-structured interviews.<sup>96</sup> Focus group discussions are structured, guided discussions that have as their sole purpose the gathering of data for scientific purpose (Patton, 2002). In such settings, participants

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<sup>96</sup> The FGDs were effective in helping us obtain information about the social norms and variety of opinions or perspectives within the three villages.

stimulate each other in an exchange of ideas that may not emerge from individual interviews or surveys. Human interaction revolves around group discussions in families, workplaces, per groups, and communities, but not all of those discussions are structured. A focus group is more than the conversation that occurs when a group of community members and leaders get together to discuss a project, search for funding or randomly emerging topics. In fact most conversations are not structured, as they do not have an agenda, a fixed time frame and a designated leader. In contrast, focus groups have all of these characteristics. The most appropriate uses of focus groups occur when researchers desire groups interacting around a topic, seek complexity of responses, and value triangulation of methods as was the case of this study (that is supplementing or complementing other methods that are looking at the topic through a different lens). Focus groups can be used on their own as a free standing research methodology, as can surveys or individual interviews. Through triangulation, focus groups can amplify other methods when they are used in combining to reinforce the advantages and strengths of each method while minimizing their disadvantages and weaknesses.

The FGDs for this research were organized to obtain more information on rural-urban migration and the extent to which people felt it had brought changes in their lives. The FGDs explored in greater detail, the experiences of Abutia women, in order to gain further clarification on issues that were raised during individual interviews. The purpose was to confirm the preliminary findings with a larger group of community members. The original plan was to organize two focus group discussions in each village, one with males and the other with females. However, as indicated earlier in the thesis, during interview



sessions where both male and females were present, we observed that the women were eloquent in the presence of the men and answered most questions rather well. As a result, we felt the separation was unnecessary and both sexes were combined during the group discussions.

We organized focus group discussions in the three villages on Wednesdays, spanning a three-week period.<sup>97</sup> The first focus group was held in Teti and consisted of 26 community members, while the second was in Agorve and consisted of 15 community members, and the last one, which was held in Kloe, had 34 participants. Due to the large number of participants in Teti and Kloe, we had two FGDs, with one session in the morning and the other in the afternoon. Each focus group session lasted for about two hours. There were more women than men at all the meetings but generally, participants shared a common socio-economic status.

All the participants lived in the villages and, therefore, were familiar with one another. This encouraged the group to speak more freely about the subject without fear of being judged by others. More importantly, they showed respect for each other. For example, participants were quiet and listened when someone was speaking. They nodded their heads when in agreement, and waited for their turn to speak when they disagreed with someone's opinion. The most amazing observation was that they focused on the issues

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<sup>97</sup>The focus group discussions were scheduled specifically for Wednesdays because these are considered a day of rest so most villagers are usually at home. It was therefore the most appropriate day to have as many villagers as possible attend the FGDs.

being discussed and not on the individuals. As a result, nobody took the other's opinion personally, and there were no misunderstandings or disagreements.

All the focus groups were well attended and interactive. I facilitated the discussions as the principal researcher, assisted by the research assistants who took notes and arranged the tape recording. I facilitated the discussion through a process of "guided interaction." I drew out motivations, feelings, and values behind verbalizations through skilful probing and restating of responses. I used a FGD guide, which consisted of a list of topics or question areas, and served as a summary statement of the issues and objectives to be covered by the focus group. The guide also served as a road map and as a memory aid for me, and also provided the initial outline for the report of findings. The discussions were conducted in a relaxed atmosphere which enabled participants to express themselves without any personal inhibitions. It encouraged different points of view, without pressurizing participants to reach a consensus (Krueger, 1988). For example, whilst men felt they perform a lot of hard work, women also indicated that overall they do more work than the men.

In both interviews and focus group discussions, participants were encouraged to explore issues of interest to them and in as much detail as they wished, since the focus group discussions were primarily participant-led explorations of their daily lives. I was interested in giving the villagers the opportunity to construct and convey their stories, and to reflect in greater details upon their experiences over the course of their lives.

Participants discussed particular issues such as women's role in the household, farming, and women's access to resources.

During the discussions, I reflected upon each dialogue, and expressed my understanding by repeating what the participant had said, in order to check its accuracy. Discussing responses gave us the opportunity to clear up issues of English-*Ewe-dome* interpretation, and also enabled the participants to add further elaborations to their initial thoughts. A few misinterpretations were straightened out.<sup>98</sup> This process of checks and balances created greater trust between participants and the research team, as the participants realized that we were committed to understand and convey accurately meanings of their words. The FGDs afforded us with depth and insight into the research question and helped us contextualize our data.

#### 4.8.4 Participant Observation

The research team also engaged in participant observation by taking part in activities both in the households and also at the village level. Some of the activities in which we participated include the following: helping with meal preparation, fetching water and fuel wood, attending the farm with the women, helping with household chores, taking care of children, accompanying patients to the clinic, and attending church services and funerals.

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<sup>98</sup> For example, we had to pay special attention to the use of the words households and families in the Ewe language *fhome* and *afe*, and household heads *fhometator* and family unit head *afetator* to differentiate when participants referred to a migrant husband or his elderly father, the respondent. *Fhome* usually refers to the extended family. However, within the context of this study *fhome* means household and *fhometator* refers to the head of household who is usually eldest male in the household. *Afe* on the other hand refers to a family unit and an *afetator* means the head of the family unit.

This participatory method gave us the opportunity to observe and experience the lived reality of rural life, and also cross-check information obtained in the interviews and FGDs with what was observable in the households (Oakley & Mardsen, 1984).

Patton (2002:346) defines participant observation as an inductive method of data generation. The author suggests that the difference between interviewing and observation is that in observation one watches as events unfold, whereas with interviews “one gets noisy.” Interviews are self-reports of experiences, opinions and feelings, whereas observation relies on the observer’s ability to interpret what is happening and the reason behind it. According to Maguire (1987:211) observation entails being present in a situation and making a record of one’s impressions of what takes place. Patton (2002:359) asserts that directness is the major advantage of observation. Researchers watch what they do and listen to what they say, rather than asking people about their views and feelings. According to the author, this directness provides a degree of validity as it concentrates upon what people really do, as opposed to what they say they do.

During the participant observation we made notes of the division of labour within the households, conversations pertaining to the research topic and other relevant discussions that shed more light on the lives of the villagers. During a visit to one of the households during the evening meal preparation time, we observed the husband resting in a wooden reclining chair on the veranda, while the wife pounding fufu and stirring it at the same

time in the open kitchen.<sup>99</sup> This is the exchange that occurred between Richard, one of our research assistants and the couple:

**Dialogue between researcher and a couple:**

**R: Good evening to you all.**

**H & W:** Good evening. How is your household?

**R: We are all well. And how are you and the members of your household? I see that it is time for preparing the evening meal.**

**H:** Yes, indeed it is. And since it is the woman's job I am just sitting here thinking for the family while she cooks the evening meal.

**R: I thought the man usually pounds the fufu and the woman stirs it.**

**H:** Yes, that still happens in some homes, but not everywhere. These days the mortars are made in such a way that the woman only stirs the fufu occasionally so she does not need my help. More also, I am not only sitting here idle but rather, I am making plans for the future of the family. I am doing serious thinking.

**W:** hhhmmm (signs). About the mortar...this design came from the north. Over there the men never help the women with the fufu so the women designed mortars that turn the fufu as you pound. We never needed that because our men used to be more helpful. Now that some men have travelled, the ones at home claim they work harder on the farm and refused to help in any way. We the women also work harder on the farm and come home more tired than before. So when this mortar was introduced to us, we bought it because we do not have to depend on the men for help that they never give, or are not willing to give. Depend on them and your cooked cassava and yam will get cold and you cannot pound it anymore.

**H:** Women! They are never satisfied!! Who brought home the bush meat that you have used for the soup? Do you know the skill and labour that hunting requires? How many women in the village are enjoying bush meat soup with their evening meal? Women! Give them everything you have and they will still complain!<sup>100</sup>

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<sup>99</sup> Mortar is made from the stem of a specific large tree. It is scooped and refined until it looks like an hour glass. A pestle is also made from a branch of a tree and the head is pounded on a special stone until it is suitable for pounding. Fufu is a staple meal that is usually prepared from cooked tubers such as yam, cassava and cocoyam and sometimes plantain. The tubers are first sliced and boiled until they are well cooked. Then the slices are put into the mortar one at a time and pounded until they become soft like mashed potatoes. This is eaten with vegetable soup and either meat or fish. Pounding fufu is a laborious task, especially for a large family.

<sup>100</sup> Participant Observation, Abutia Teti, February, 2006.

This dialogue provided greater insight into division of labour in the home. According to Patton (2002:346), the most fundamental advantage of various observational strategies depends on the extent to which the researcher will be a participant in the setting being studied. In line with Patton's assertion, the research team decided that it would be beneficial to have its three members to undertake participant observation at the same time. The purpose was to increase the quality of the data by providing a larger volume of data and thereby decrease the influence of observer bias. For example, as we later discussed our notes, we realized that the design of the mortar was not mentioned in the interviews or FGDs. It showed the creative way in which rural women cope with their household responsibilities. This is information that we would otherwise have missed without participant observation.

By directly observing household activities, we obtained information that complemented earlier ones. Through this approach we were able to develop a more comprehensive understanding of the context within which the Abutia people live (Oakley & Mardsen, 1984). It also allowed us to learn about things the community members did not find necessary to discuss in an interview or focus group, such as the new fufu mortar design discussed earlier.

#### 4.8.5 Personal Narratives

A few personal narratives were added to the research with the hope of providing greater insight into the particular circumstances that shape women's lives. These personal

narratives complemented the data gathered during the interview sessions. In fact there was not a clear distinction between data that constituted interviews and personal narratives. The narratives, although short, are rich and thought-provoking as it provided more insight into women's lived realities including their perceptions of their changing roles as wives, mothers, and producers. With the permission of some research participants, synopses of their life stories have been included in some chapters of the thesis.<sup>101</sup>

#### **4.9 Data Processing and Analysis**

As indicated earlier in the dissertation, the study used qualitative research methodology, which was supplemented by quantitative research methods. Qualitative research is characterized by an emphasis on understanding, and explaining complex phenomena. It concentrates on studying, for example, the relationships, patterns and configurations among factors, or the context in which activities occur, and uses description and content analysis as the core of analysis. The focus is on understanding the full multi-dimensional, dynamic picture of the subject of study. Thus, data analysis in qualitative research provides ways of discerning, examining, comparing and contrasting, and interpreting meaningful themes in research results (Oakley & Mardsen, 1984). In quantitative analysis, on the other hand, numbers and what they stand for are the material of analysis. The approach of qualitative research, therefore, contrasts with quantitative

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<sup>101</sup> See quotation at the beginning of the thesis.

methods that aim to divide phenomena into manageable, clearly defined pieces or variables. Quantification is good for separating phenomena into distinct and workable elements of well-defined conceptual framework.

In this study, the collected data was analyzed using a multidisciplinary approach consisting of a combination of these two research methods. At the end of the data collection phase of our research, the team reviewed the transcripts of the interviews and field notes and drew out some preliminary findings (Patton, 2002). I endeavored to retain the language used by participants in order to identify significant elements belonging to the different themes. I began the analysis of the qualitative data by going back to the objective of the study, to ensure that the process of data analysis is systematic and verifiable (Maguire, 1987). Initially, I analyzed all the qualitative data manually. This involved sorting out notes and transcripts into the broad topics or sub-topics used in the research, or adding any new themes that emerged from the interviews. This procedure ensured that “scattered pieces of information” on the same sub-topic were put together for a complete review. I undertook the final editing, and coded and entered the data into the computer for analysis.

By the time the data analysis was completed, the major findings of the study had become apparent. A framework arose from the analysis of themes that pointed to the distinct and sometimes very different lenses through which issues in the community are viewed. It was evident that for many villagers, migration is the main option available to diversify household income. For households that save in order to contribute financially to the



migrants cost, it is both an exciting and apprehensive event. Most people in the households sampled associate migration with dynamism and a means to better employment and the achievement of their dreams. But at the same time, some household members feel a sense of abandonment or a lack of commitment on the part of the migrants, especially if they are unable to send remittances. However, for the majority of respondents, the villager's propensity to migrate is justified by the fact that by migrating, they are no longer a financial burden on their families. Additionally, it enables the migrants to find jobs and/or attend educational institutions or enter apprenticeships, and later provide support to their households and support the development of the community.

The study also utilized secondary data that was collected from books, academic works and articles, journals and reports produced by individual authors, NGOs, and government reports on migration, gender, rural livelihoods and development that were found in the libraries of the University of Birmingham, Carleton University, University of Ghana, and the University of Ottawa. Other sources of information include books and articles borrowed from family and friends, Ghana government archival documents, census data, and research publications on migration in Ghana and other developing countries.

#### **4.10 Field Work Evaluation**

During the fieldwork period, I made the effort to think through the research process that I was using, and every research related function that I was performing periodically. For this, I questioned myself about the relevancy and accuracy of my work and developed

checks and balances that strengthened the research. For example, at the end of each day, members of the research team exchanged questionnaires and reviewed each other's interviewee responses. We checked for errors, gaps or missing information, and identified any issues that arose from the review. I always used my field diary during the reviews. This approach helped me to get in-depth understanding of the issues, to identify missing information, and to achieve research validity.

#### **4.11 Dissemination of Preliminary Research Findings**

At the end of six months in the field, as I reflected on the research experience, I recalled a quote from Patricia Maguire (1987:30)

“...while direct community action is an intended outcome of participatory research; the important point is that those involved in the production of knowledge are involved in the decision-making regarding its use and application to their everyday lives.”

As a result of this reflection, after obtaining the initial data analysis of the research, we organized an informal preliminary dissemination meeting in the three villages, with the purpose of sharing the preliminary findings with the community members.<sup>102</sup> The main goal of this meeting was to allow participants to reflect on my analysis and findings, and to ensure that I had not misunderstood or misrepresented their interests, and also to receive feedback from the community. For example, during semi-structured interviews and FGDs, some women indicated that they play a dominant role in farming and trading. However, at the dissemination meeting, these women wanted us to emphasize the point

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<sup>102</sup> Field research is not simply the process of collecting, analyzing and interpreting data and producing written accounts detailing conclusions and recommendations drawn from the data. (Maguire, 1987:241)

that, even though they Abutia women had experienced an increased workload in the household, they have less public authority and fewer opportunities to generate change at the village level than men. This emphasis and other feedback received at the seminar were incorporated in the data analysis. The meeting was important because it afforded the villagers a final opportunity to participate in reviewing the data before it is printed.



PLATE 4.6. A cross-section of people who participated in the dissemination meeting.

#### **4.12 Challenges in the Field**

Cross cultural research usually has its own unique challenges, and I faced a few of these challenges in the field. Some of the challenges include language barrier, differences in culture and inability to find appropriate respondents. In this study, although it was relatively easy to find respondents with the help of pre-established social networks and also through snowball sampling, it was sometimes challenging to pin down some heads

of household during the earlier hours of the day. This was because being a farming community, most of the people left for their farms early in the morning and returned late in the afternoon. As a result we had to find out through word of mouth, heads of households who would not go to the farm on each day. In order to offset this challenge, most of the interviews were conducted in the afternoons and on Wednesdays.<sup>103</sup>

Another big challenge had to do with the language(s) for both conducting and writing up the research. As indicated earlier, *Ewe-dome* is the (indigenous) language spoken in the research area. During fieldwork the questionnaires, semi-structured interview and FGDs guides were all written in English. These were translated into the *Ewe-dome* language, in which we interviewed research participants. Their responses were given to us in *Ewe-dome*, which was then translated and written down in English. The field notes and transcripts as well as the thesis are written in English. This translation back and forth was a very big challenge for the research team, but we were able to deal with it as a result of our fluency in both languages.

We were also concerned that some research concepts might not be easily translatable into the *Ewe-dome* language, and that the culture may have a different perspective on questions surrounding the issues. The language differences presented a specific challenge for the research, mainly because it was conducted in a cross-cultural context. Difficulties in finding comparable terms were, however, worked out. The meaning of concepts such as family units and households which form an important component of the

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<sup>103</sup> As indicated earlier in the thesis, Wednesdays are farm taboo days, a day of rest on which the villagers do not go to their farms.

research were cross-checked. In this process, we were concerned about the possibility that some meanings could have been lost in translation. However, the research team endeavored to minimize this risk by using four different study instruments and also by comparing research notes and cross-checking some interpretations and observations with each other.

I also had to deal with the idea that “voluntary participation” might be a concept that is more easily understood in my experiences in Canada and the UK, than Abutia. I had not anticipated that people might not understand that the term allows them to decline from participating or to withdraw from the study after it had begun. In one instance, a woman agreed to participate in the research, but missed all the appointments we had agreed upon with her. The research assistants and I realized that she simply did not know how to tell us that she did not want to participate. Realizing this, we stopped seeing her about the research, but continued to greet her so that she would realize that we understood the non-verbal messages, but were not upset with her decision.<sup>104</sup>

In another example, a man agreed to participate in the study but remained openly hostile in our initial meetings and throughout the first interview, demanding to know why he had to participate in the study. After reviewing the transcripts and discussing the situation with team members, I realized that in this case, the man was afraid he would lose out on

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<sup>104</sup> Greeting is an important customary requirement in Ghana, especially in the rural areas. People are expected to greet each other when they meet, whether you know them or not. It is a sign of good will, and only enemies do not greet each other. As a result, when you meet someone and do not greet, it may be taken to mean that you harbour ill feelings against the person.

any incentives that might be gained from participating, for example the soap we gave participants. Our repeated reminders that he was not obligated to participate and that he was free to withdraw at anytime were unheeded. As was the case with the woman, we decided to withdraw him from the rest of the study but continued to greet him during our stay in the village. As a sign of goodwill we gave each of them a sachet of the soap we gave research participants. Both of these cases revealed that I had taken for granted that the informed consent process would be understood. It might well have been that the permission granted to us by the chiefs and elders to conduct the project meant to some people in the villages that their participation in the research was mandatory. These two cases brought home the importance of observing people's actions and questioning the interface between words and actions throughout the research.

One other challenge was the interaction with research participants, which was mediated by politics of representation. From the earliest research encounters, I realized that people's oral accounts of their lives and experiences were both factual and simultaneously "constructed" (Abu-Lughod, 1993). The way both men and women represented themselves related to expectations they had of me as a development researcher and a woman. As a Ghanaian woman living in the Diaspora, residents of Abutia assumed that I was well-educated, and, therefore, wealthy and capable of mobilizing resources and institutional support for the villages. To members of the three communities, the combined identity of being a "foreigner" and a researcher implied that my work had a "development" agenda. As a result they expected me to obtain some government funding for women to trade and to purchase agricultural inputs for the men.

As indicated earlier in the thesis, in order to curtail this assumption, I described in detail the purpose of other research, emphasizing my role as a student, and how the research findings would be used. The continued emphasis on my role as a student and not a worker, finally, made them understand my position. Lastly, limits imposed on the researcher in terms of time and money did not make the collection of a larger data sample possible. Despite the above limitations, I believe the study still covered the key points that it intended to investigate.

#### **4.13 Ethical Considerations**

According to Maguire (1987), one of the building blocs of participatory research is the need to respect and be accountable to the people of the community where the research is carried out. This was interpreted in a number of ways in our study. It included respect for the societal and cultural values, as well as the perceptions and behaviour of both women and men, even in situations where we were not in agreement with the ideas expressed. This respect is based on the assumption that the people are knowledgeable about their situation and that whatever interpretation they have of their lives makes sense to them. According to Gottfried (1996), research participants are conscious of what would be useful in changing their lives. Our goal as researchers was to explore and facilitate the process of acquiring this knowledge.

Respect and accountability was also interpreted to mean the inclusion of as many women as possible in the study as subjects. This was particularly important because the research

was conducted in a patriarchal cultural context. Since in the research area male views tend to dominate all public gatherings, we included as many women as possible in the study in order to obtain a balanced male-female perspective.

The research team also tried as much as possible to be honest about the purpose of the study. Each participant was given a verbal explanation of a letter outlining the purpose of the research. In addition we ensured that community members understood the implications of their involvement before giving their consent to participate.

#### **4.14 Strengths and Limitations of Research**

Validity and reliability are two factors which any qualitative researcher should be concerned about when designing a study, analyzing results and judging the quality of the study. According to Silverman (2005:221) the researcher should show his/her audience the procedures he/she used to ensure that the research methods are reliable and that the conclusions drawn are valid. In qualitative research validity is used to indicate that the research findings are sound, well grounded, justifiable or logically ordered. According to Patton (2002:277), validity is to argue that the findings are in fact true and certain.<sup>105</sup> Thus validity determines whether the research truly measures that which it was intended to measure.

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<sup>105</sup> Here, the term “true” means that the findings accurately represent the phenomena to which they refer and “certain” means that the findings are backed by evidence - or warranted - and there are no good grounds for doubting the findings, or the evidence for the findings in question is stronger than the evidence for alternative findings.



In order to ensure validity we always referred to the goals and objectives of the research, as well as the research questions we were asking. The purpose was to ensure that the data collected answered these questions and fulfilled the objectives of the research. To this end we used four complementary data collection methods of questionnaire survey, interviews, focus group discussions and participant observation to support and check one method's validity. The combination of methods proved to be very fruitful during the field work. For instance information from participant observation helped us to cross check information we got through the interviews. Furthermore, the information provided by the heads of households was verified through interviews with members of the Abutia migrants association in Accra.

We also made the effort to ensure reliability in this study, for which it was crucial to examine the trustworthiness of our ability and commitment to the research methodology as well as the data obtained. According to Patton (2002:561) the researcher's ability and skill in any qualitative research also impacts on the reliability and the validity of a study. Some of the factors affecting reliability of a research are the wording of questions, the physical setting, the respondents' mood and the nature of interaction. Although we had no control over the physical setting, we ensured that participants were in a responsive mood, and rescheduled meetings whenever we felt that they were too tired from farm work or too busy with their household chores. We also dressed down to the level of the villagers. This gesture proved useful in removing any possible psychological gap between the research team and the villagers. The sampling method, for instance, the purposive snowball method, provided me with an opportunity to obtain background information

about the respondents before they were interviewed. This approach also proved to be very important in developing rapport. It also provided me with an opportunity to meet specifically with members of migrant households. Hence, this approach minimized errors and improved the trustworthiness of the research findings.

For the study to be statistically representative of the country, a large sample should have been selected out of all the districts. Thus, given that rural-urban migration exists in all districts and affects women's livelihood in one way or the other, the question one would raise is why the researcher chose to focus on only one district. First of all, the purpose of the study did not make such a venture necessary. This research makes predominant use of qualitative methodology, which does not require a large amount of data for analysis. Additionally, the study primarily sought to examine the impact of rural-urban migration on the livelihood of women, and to argue out a case for a more gender sensitive approach to development practice. It was possible to achieve this research goal without necessarily utilizing a broader sample of the population.

The reliability of the research is equally evident in the findings, which pointed to a high level of similarity in people's experience within the research areas. In order to be able to capture these social realities in depth, it was useful to concentrate on a specific community of people rather than an aggregate of communities. In comparing and contrasting the research findings with existing literature, it was found that the decisions that rural households make pertaining to migration and the consequences thereof, were found to be similar. The differences were found in context specific decisions. The

checks and balances of the research methodology points to the fact that the information collected for this study is valid as well as reliable, and provided a valid context for analyzing the research questions.

#### **4.15 Conclusion**

This chapter discussed the methodological approaches used during the fieldwork. It looked at the process of data collection and analysis, as well as the various challenges encountered during the field work. Starting with basic background information about the study, the chapter discussed the process of defining and operationalizing the relationships between the methodological and contextual issues of the study. These include an understanding of the context of the study; deciding on the sources of data and justification for whatever choices are made; developing, testing and refining the study instruments to ensure that the questions posed address gender concerns; explaining the procedures used in analyzing the field data and the ethical challenges of the research process. The multiple methodologies applied in this study complemented each other, minimized errors and improved the trustworthiness of the research.

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **Gender Relations and Factors that affect Ghanaian Women**

#### **5.1 Introduction**

One of the objectives of this thesis is to examine the socio-economic and cultural factors that affect status and role of rural women in Ghana. This chapter presents an analysis of Ghanaian women from a historical perspective. It discusses the changes that have occurred to alter the role and position of women in the society, beginning from pre-colonial times through the colonial era until the contemporary period. This historical review enables us to understand the evolution of women's role and position in the Ghanaian society.

The discussions also provide us an insight into the existing socio-cultural context and the challenges that women have to deal with. This discussion gives as a clear picture of issues that confront women on a daily basis, before the added consequences of rural-urban migration. It will serve well in identifying policy implications for gender relations. This is important given the long years of activism by both the UN agencies and women's organizations to ensure that all policy making and development practice promote women's socio-economic well being and equality (UN, 1995).

## 5.2 Gender Relations in Pre-Colonial Ghana

During the traditional pre-colonial era, Ghanaian women played significant roles in the society (Dei-Anang 1964).<sup>106</sup> According to Anquandah (1982), women possessed a status that was distinguishable from their British counterparts. They also had well-defined and recognized roles in all spheres of human endeavor. Customary law permitted women to maintain separate identities during marriage, and most importantly, they had a right to own property (Anquandah 1982). Among most ethnic groups, women took part in the political governance of their respective communities through the institution of the office of the Queen-mother, who served as an advisor to the chief, and played a vital role in the election and subsequent enstoolment or destoolment of chiefs (Agbodeka, 1992). Hence the contribution of women to the society was recognized and appreciated.

During the pre-colonial era, societal division of labor varied from one community to another in all Ghanaian societies (Nabila, 1986). For example, among the Ewes in the Volta Region of Ghana, food processing, marketing and distributary trade were the responsibilities of women, while the men cultivated, harvested crops and undertook hunting and fishing (Kludze, 1988). Even where division of labor was according to sex, the contribution of one sex was not necessarily regarded as more important than the other (Boateng, 1993). Anquandah (1982) argues that the division of labor that existed was mainly based on complementarities between male and female contributions to the

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<sup>106</sup> Ghana used to be known as the Gold Coast prior to its independence on 6<sup>th</sup> March 1957 when the name was changed to Ghana, after the old Ghana Empire.

development of the society. From this brief overview, it can be inferred that women had higher social status during the pre-colonial era.

It is, however, dangerous to make sweeping generalizations of the progress of women during the pre-colonial period. This is because evidence from the literature also showed that in most cases, some women played secondary roles in pre-colonial Ghanaian societies, and only achieved power when there was no serious competition from men (Agbodeka, 1992; House-Midamba & Ekechi, 1995). Even though it can be said that women had a relatively higher level of status during pre-colonial times, overall, the societal structures that existed during this era prevented these women from realizing their full potential (Fage, 1959; Manuh 1992). There is a school of thought that blames the problems of sub-Saharan Africa and Ghana for that matter, on colonialism (Nukunya, 1975). As such, it would be remiss to analyze gender, migration and rural livelihood in Africa without mentioning the impact of colonialism on gender relations.

### **5.3 Gender Relations during the Colonial Period**

The imposition of colonial rule by the British brought about significant changes in the gender relations within the Ghanaian society (Huq, 1989). The effect of colonialism on the society has, however, been the subject of much debate. While some historians see it only as a passing phase, (Ajayi, 1968 cited in Buvinic et al, 1983) others have described it as a traumatic experience for communities (Rodney, 1972 cited in Parpart, 1989). Bortei-Doku, (1991) argues that colonialism had a negative impact on gender relations

and affected the status of Ghanaian women, and consequently their ability to contribute to the society.<sup>107</sup> According to Hutchful (1987), through the colonization of Ghana by the British, a strong patriarchal and capitalist ideology was introduced. Aidoo (1993) acknowledges that a minimal form of patriarchy existed in pre-colonial Ghanaian society. However, the author emphasizes that the system of patriarchy only became fully entrenched during colonialism. Gordon (1993) contends that the British attempted to dissolve the rural Ghanaian community by replacing them with oppressive systems of private property, wage labor, class stratification and the introduction of an imported British culture and patriarchal system.<sup>108</sup>

According to Ameyibor (1993), the British also introduced a Euro-centric system, which significantly changed the domestic lives of Ghanaian women as they began to adopt the British culture. The author contends that with the imposition of English law, the legal status of Ghanaian women was watered down. This is because the English law, in both theory and practice, did not recognize any of the rights accorded to Ghanaian women under customary law in the pre-colonial society. Under English Law, marriage resulted in a merger of identity of husband and wife (Hutchful, 1987). The inability of women to own property under British law was based on the logic of their own human status being regarded as property. Women could not participate in political activities as Queen-mothers were doing in Ghana. Essentially, therefore, Ghanaian women were

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<sup>107</sup> There is a vast literature on colonialism and economic exploitation. However, this thesis does not have the intention of reviewing all that information. The study adopts the position that colonialism has been a major contributor in the continued marginalization and impoverishment of African countries.

<sup>108</sup> In pre-colonial times the social system was based mainly on communal ownership of land and resources.

comparatively better off than their counterparts in England (Sarfo, 1987). However, with the imposition of colonial rule, they were forced to grapple with an alien system of suppression. As succinctly put by Boahen (1966), “colonialism introduced wrong concepts of Christianity and Victorian morality and values into the Ghanaian society, and worsened the already comparatively inferior position of Ghanaian women.”

One important change that occurred was that Ghanaian men in both rural and urban areas were granted more power as decision-makers. This is because the British were only willing to engage in business transactions with men (Roncoli, 1985). As a result, Ghanaian women became further removed from the important decision-making processes that acknowledged their strength and validated their contributions (Ameyibor, 1993). Panuccio (1989:79) argues that Ghanaian women lost much of their strength, status and power through the deterioration of the rural community that was based on mutual access to the benefits of production, which was mainly subsistence agriculture. Colonialism also had an impact on the role of women as producers (Hutchful, 1987). According to Ameyibor (1993), men were recognized as workers whilst similar contributions of women were overlooked. This male-oriented division of labor created sharp gender divisions, and may have been the genesis of further widening of gap in the economic and social status of Ghanaian men and women.<sup>109</sup>

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<sup>109</sup> See Manuh (1984) for an elaboration of the way in which colonialism utilized the traditional sexual division of labour to release men to work in towns. Also see Kuenyehia (1998) for a discussion of expectations of Ghanaian women.



The effect of colonial rule on women could also be seen from the colonial agricultural policy which emphasized the growth of cash crops as raw material for British industries abroad (Ameyibot, 1993). The capitalistic interests of the British were developed and maintained as Ghanaian male farmers who lived in the rural areas were literally forced to stop producing food crops and to produce cash crops for the foreign cheap market (Sarfoh, 1987). This resulted in the emergence of a new gender pattern of production, in which men were given the sole prerogative to cultivate cash crops while women were relegated to the production of food crops (Hutchful, 1987).

The colonial government also established large-scale farms that employed only men (Kludze, 1988). The favour given by the colonial power to the growth of cash crops was also seen in terms of the significant level of attention given to each type of farming in the area of extension services, research and technology (Parpart, 2000). For example, farming improvement efforts were concentrated in the male cash crop sector, while the female food crop sector continued with traditional low-productivity methods (Nabila, 1986). The introduction of new technology tended to widen the gap between men and women both in economic and social terms (Ameyibor, 1993). For example, the livelihood of Nzima women in Ghana was threatened by the introduction of mechanized means of producing palm oil, which employed only men, and marginalized women (House-Midamba & Ekechi, 1995).

Most cash crop farms were located in fertile regions of the country. As such men were compelled to leave their families in the rural areas of origin, and migrated to work on the

farms. Other men were employed in lower sectors in the economy in transporting and loading cocoa, in the government offices as messengers, or in homes as houseboys (Fage, 1959). The introduction of a migrant male labour system meant that women were banished to remain in the remote impoverished rural areas, where they could barely make a living. This increased dependency amongst women led to a destruction of the cohesive pre-colonial family structure, for as the burden of women steadily increased, some of them moved to urban areas (Ameyibor, 1993). However, they were met with severe discrimination in the men's world of the city, where they were confined to limited sectors such as domestic work, which paid low wages (Kaufert, 1976). This situation resulted in further marginalization of women within the productive sector of the economy.

One notable feature of colonial administration, which significantly influenced the lives of Ghanaian men and women, was the introduction of Western education. It was mostly men who received Western education. Little attention was paid to women's education in Ghana during the colonial era (Anquandah, 1982). For the British government, education was a tool for the introduction of their culture, religion, and for their economic advancement in a foreign land (Agbodeka, 1992). It was also an instrument of policy, which made it possible for the British administration to have Ghanaian clerks, interpreters and others to run the lower echelons of the government (Fage, 1959). Formally educated persons, mainly males, took the job opportunities created in the newly established bureaucracy. Women were not allowed to apply for clerical and administrative jobs, as the few who went to school were mainly trained in home making and were only employed as maids (Mikell, 1989). During the colonial period, therefore,

education became an important instrument for upward mobility within colonial society. Manuh (1992) asserts that education produced not only the low level manpower for the British administration, but also professional elite Ghanaian men who eventually took over from the British. Education was therefore a liberating force for the few who benefited from it, but an oppressive force for the majority.

It is evident from the discussions that the issue of gender relations lays at the heart of imperial authority (Gray, 1992). Yet in spite of all the negative impact of colonialism, it can be argued that in some respects, colonialism also alleviated the negative conditions of some women by removing social practices and customs, to which women were subjected, such as widowhood rites (Anquandah, 1982; Mikell, 1986). However, for the majority of women, especially rural women, the colonial administration meant a loss of their livelihood and social status (Bukh, 1979). In subtle ways, gendered perspectives within colonialism partly account for a gradual evolution of gender inequity and underdevelopment in Ghana, a situation that has continued into the contemporary period.

#### **5.4 Gender Relations in Contemporary Times**

The post-independence scenario has brought some changes in the status of women. Gender gaps in education and health are narrowing, and more women are actively participating in economic development in the region. They are reducing the barriers that confined them to household reproductive functions and self-employment (Ardayfio-

Schandorf, 1994). However, this progress is slow and uneven.<sup>110</sup> Women still lag behind in almost every key area of development (Amanor 2001). It is only recently that it has been recognized by policymakers in Ghana that, though women constitute an overwhelming majority among the poor, programs for economic and social development are structurally biased in favor of men (Oppong, 1987a). This bias is now being gradually acknowledged, and corrective policies and programs are being formulated (Chao, 1999). However, to date, economic, political and social contributions of women are culturally and statistically under-valued, and remain equally undervalued in public policy formulation (Manuh, 1984). Particularly undervalued have been women's multiple roles as food producers, carriers of water, collectors of firewood, processors and preparers of food, carer of the sick, elderly and children (Oppong, 1987b).

In terms of the relevance of gender inequality as a factor in migration, earlier discussions in the thesis show that gender underpins the socio-cultural context within which migration occurs in Ghana (Amanor, 2001). The existing socio-economic factors that affect women in Ghana tend to support the prevalence of male rural-urban migration (GSS, 2000a). It determines the opportunities available to women and men, and reveals issues that households have to consider in moving during the pre-migration stage (De Jong, 2000: 307). The rest of the chapter explores some of these factors that confront rural women on a daily basis.

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<sup>110</sup> For example, in many developing countries, a woman's role is still defined in terms of marriage and child rearing, and girls' education is seen as less important than boys'.

## 5.5 Factors that Impact on Ghanaian Women

The social benefits associated with developing women's human capital are well-recognized. A growing body of literature indicates that greater gender equality, including better access to productive resources, greatly improves both the welfare and economic productivity of women (Parpart, 1989; Akinboade, 1999). However contrary to this observation, Ghanaian women continue to face economic, social, institutional and legal barriers in carrying out their economic activities (Oppong & Abu, 1987; GSS, 2000b). According to Abrokwa (1993), women's access to resources, whether land, labour or education, is substantially less than that of men. Access to these resources may be direct or indirect, and are often important determinants of a woman's economic livelihood (Beneria & Fieldman, 1992).

### 5.5.1 Women's Access to Education

The low educational status of Ghanaian women is an important development concern because it influences their socio-economic status in the society (Ansu-Kyeremeh 1997).<sup>111</sup> In urban areas, a lack of educational qualification or having a narrow range of skills limits women's access to formal employment. In rural areas, lack of formal or informal education tends to limit the access of women to agricultural extension services and consequently, also likely to reduce farm productivity (Brydon, 1987). Inadequate

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<sup>111</sup>According to figures from the Ghana Statistical Service (2002), Ghana has a literacy rate of 47.9%. Males constitute 62.3%, which is higher than the female rate of 36.4%. Same gender disparity applies to the Volta region.

literacy and numeric skills also curb the efficiency of female petty traders and business women.<sup>112</sup>

### 5.5.2 Access to Health

The lack of priority in women's health issues in Ghana is a major concern in the development discourse. Evidence from the literature suggests that there are biases in government spending towards urban health facilities (Kerr et al, 2000). This bias has negative consequences for rural populations, especially women and children. The results include delays in seeking and receiving treatment as well as inadequate health facilities, which subsequently results in an immeasurable number of preventable deaths (Awusabo-Asare et al, 1993). A priority issue in women's health is high infant and maternal mortality rate, which is high in Ghana, even by African standards (Anarfi et al. 2001).

Fertility rates in Ghana are high, and this is linked to demographic factors such as early marriage and childbirth (WHO, 2004). It is obvious, however, that socio-economic and cultural factors such as gender inequity underlie these patterns (Awumbila, 2001).<sup>113</sup> Unequal gender relations also manifest themselves in decision-making patterns relating to fertility, which tend to reflect male rather than female preferences (Oppong, 1987). The study argues that as long as women lack bargaining power within sexual relationships, the success of conventional family planning initiatives will be limited.

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<sup>112</sup> See discussion on education in chapter 8.

<sup>113</sup> See Awumbila (2001) for an elaboration of issues of gender and resource allocation in Ghana.

The current trend in Ghana is towards the privatization of health services both in urban and rural areas. This is particularly of concern in terms of continued decline in the accessibility to affordable good quality health services (Brown & Kerr, 1997). The unequal access to health can be addressed by improving access to more adequate health care and women's health care facilities. A basic level of government funded primary health care must be maintained in order to avoid further deterioration of services to poor rural women (Blanc & Loyd, 1990). The Ghana government has embarked on the National Health Insurance Scheme to address this problem. However, the implementation of the Scheme has proven to be very problematic, and has not solved the problem by a long shot. In the longer term, educating women is a better solution because increased education is correlated with lower personal ill health, as well as maternal and child mortality.

### 5.5.3 Women and the Legal System

The legal system is yet another factor that impacts on Ghanaian women and, therefore needs to be considered in the gender, migration and livelihood debate. The legal system in Ghana consists of customary laws, colonial and contemporary laws, as well as constitutional provisions under the Four Republics (Manuh, 1997). All these legal laws, together with traditional laws that vary by region and ethnicity, are implemented concurrently (Kludze, 1988).<sup>114</sup> The complexity of the legal situation has important

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<sup>114</sup> See Manuh (1984) for a discussion of the relationships between the law and women's status in Ghana.

implications for gender relations because Ghanaian women have been caught between the decline in traditional systems, and the failure of the legal system to enforce their legal rights and provisions. As a result, both systems fail to provide them with any meaningful protection (Manuh, 1984; Kuenyehia, 1992).

#### 5.5.4 Women and Marriage

The area within the legal system that affects rural women most is marriage (Oppong, 1984). Gendered rights and obligations within marriage in Ghana are shaped in a large part by the local gender ideologies and social norms (Manuh, 1997). These collection of gendered rights and responsibilities within marriage and rural households are negotiated within what Ann Whitehead (1991) refers to as the “conjugal contract.”<sup>115</sup> Marriages are also centered on a marked gender division of labour between women and men’s tasks. Women are commonly associated with the work of childbearing and childrearing, while men are typically associated with the roles of household financial and material providers (Oppong, 1983). Understanding these dynamics of marriage and the division of labour within the household is important as it determines the constraints and rights and privileges of the woman within the household (Awumbila & Momsen, 1995).<sup>116</sup>

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<sup>115</sup> The conjugal contract in marriage refers to the terms on which husbands and wives exchange goods, incomes and services, including labour (Ann Whitehead (1991).

<sup>116</sup> Marriage is a central component of the socio-cultural environment, and an important expectation for men and women. Some general reasons for people to marry include having a partner to raise children and establish kinship systems.



The vast majority of marriages in Ghana, about 80%, even among educated urban groups, are still contracted under customary law (GSS, 2000). One peculiar feature of marriage under customary law is the concept of separateness in terms of both identity and property acquisition. By contrast to marriage under the Ordinance, it permits couples to maintain their separate identities, thus in theory they remain as two separate individuals (Manuh, 1984). For this reason, a woman does not become a member of her husband's lineage through marriage. This individuality, accounts for the customary rule that she cannot lay claim to her husband's lineage farms even in cases where she assisted to make improvements (Awusabo-Asare, 1990).

The marriage obligation carries with it a strict sense of duty for wives to assist their husbands in their economic activities, although there is no corresponding obligation of reciprocity on the part of the husband to assist his wife (Mikell, 1986). On the one hand, a husband is seen as having full control of his wife, including sexual monopoly and the right to claim damages in the case of adultery. The wife, on the other hand, does not have the same rights (Kuenyehia, 1992).

Divorce is generally not approved under customary law or in the general society. Nevertheless, more detailed studies reveal that it appears to be widespread (Tsikata, 2001).<sup>117</sup> The general rule under customary law is that either party can apply for divorce, although permissible grounds for divorce may vary by gender (Awusabo-Asare, 1990). Broadly speaking, husbands can seek divorce on grounds of adultery of the wife, but the

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<sup>117</sup> The increase in divorce however, is more common in urban areas among educated and economically independent women.

wife cannot do the same (Manu, 1984). Other reasons for initiating divorce by the man include desertion, witchcraft and infertility. A wife can also initiate divorce on the grounds of impotence, desertion, cruelty or neglect by the husband to provide for her financially (Tsikata, 2001:87). Under customary law, wives and children are entitled to financial support upon divorce, until remarriage. In practice, however, women who initiate divorce proceedings under customary law are not able to enforce their right to alimony (Awusabo-Asare, 1990).

My own study in Abutia found that females in the villages, who are divorced, face many burdens and consequences of a break in their marital union. They lose the benefits of mutual support and companionship of a stable marital relation, and, therefore, have to develop survival strategies to cope with a variety of burdens they face. Marriage itself presents challenges, but most often being a single parent and a household head, present even greater challenges for females.

In both matrilineal and matrilineal customary systems, a woman has no direct rights to her husband's property, when he dies intestate, if no formal provision has been made for her (Manuh, 1984). In order to address this problem, the PNDC government introduced the Intestate Succession Law and other laws in 1985. Collectively, both the Customary and Intestate Law provide the framework for improved and clearly defined property rights to surviving women and children (Awusabo-Asare, 1990). However, even though the Intestate Succession Law, PNDC Law 111 (1985) has been in existence for more than two decades, there is limited knowledge of its existence in Ghana (Tsikata, 2001). The

result has been the continued application of customary laws to property distribution of a spouse who dies intestate. This has consequential injustices for women and children. These adverse marital circumstances combine with livelihood insecurity to make women in rural households highly vulnerable to economic shocks and stresses (Chambers 1989, cited in Ellis 2000).

#### 5.5.5 Women and Access to Credit

Most rural women in Ghana are involved in livelihood diversification from primary economic activities such as farming to non-farm activities consisting of mainly petty trading (Palmer, 1988). This livelihood diversification enables them to generate some of the income necessary for household consumption, and to finance their agricultural activities (Awumbila, 2001). However, the literature reveals that most banks are unwilling to provide credit for these women because they are involved in the informal sector (Litchfield & Waddington, 2003). In accessing financial services, poor women are more disadvantaged than their male counterparts, because, most of them are illiterate and lack collateral since the Ghanaian inheritance culture does not allow some of them to own property (Brown & Kerr, 1997).<sup>118</sup> According to Awumbila & Momsen (1995) most women need the consent of their husbands prior to taking a loan and some banks do

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<sup>118</sup> Access to credit in Ghana is difficult. It is even more difficult for women than men. Women tend to finance their businesses from personal savings, which is often insufficient. Traditional sources of borrowing include loans and credits from traders and relations. Women use these sources more because of their inability to access loans from banking sources. Such formal sources demand guarantees such as collateral, and proper book-keeping methods which women are unable to provide due to their lack of access to property and their low educational level.

require their husband's signature, as an integral part of the bank's lending policy. Due to this constraint, women are not suitable clientele for banks, and conversely, banks are not suitable lending institutions for women. The lack or insufficiency of credit for capital has resulted in women's inability to improve their productivity (Brown & Kerr 1997).

Though gender differences in simple access to credit are not wide, there is a substantial gap in the average size of formal loans given to men and women (Findlay, 1995). In terms of obtaining credit from the rural banks, large-scale cash crop farmers, who are often males, are given priority over food crop farmers who are invariably female (Moser, 1989). Compared to women involved in other economic activities, women in crop farming are by far the least considered by formal financial institutions for loans (Oppong, 1997). Since women have less access than men to formal credit, they tend to rely on informal credit from friends and family members (Mwabu, & Thorbecke, 2001). With little financial backing from their husbands and extended family, women have sought out and invested in social networks which provide either the social or institutional support needed to secure access to credit (Mikell, 1997). Women heads of households in the Abutia villages, for instance, often receive small periodic loans from migrant relatives to assist with family expenses or investment in their small farms. Friends and family are usually flexible about repayment, but defaulting on such loans is known to produce considerable conflict and animosity between parties involved (Momsen, 1991).

Another important source of informal credit for most women is *susu* savings networks (Nabila, 1986). *Susu* savings networks, is one of the most well-known social networks

that Ghanaian women use for savings outside of formal banking institutions (Oppong, 1997). In groups of four or five, women invest in a fixed amount of money weekly, and at the end of each month one woman takes “the pot of money” for her individual use (Ninsin, 1991). These networks offer women considerable flexibility, thereby allowing them to invest in their farms or in secondary businesses, to pay children’s school fees, or to purchase clothing for themselves and their children.

The organization of *susu* networks as rotating loans is also preferred by many women, because instead of large lump-sum loan disbursements that are characteristic of formal banks, *susu* provides women with small to moderate monetary disbursements on a regular basis (Haddad, 1991). These rotating loans are often more accommodating, and reflective of the nature of women’s financial needs. Additionally, it provides women with an on-going source of finance for as long as they remain in the network (Oppong, 1997).

Women’s involvement in these savings groups is less visible to the public, and as such women may be able to exert greater control over the proceeds of their investments (Nabila, 1986). Perhaps the most strategic benefit of *susu* savings networks is that a farmer can participate and invest in a *susu* savings network without her husband’s knowledge or his interference in the use of the money (Oppong & Abu, 1987). Since individual *susu* disbursements are of a lower monetary value than loan through a formal banking institution, a husband is less likely to pursue a wife’s additional income and expenditure (Oppong, 1997).

The *susu* network is the predominant form of financing available to women in Abutia. Most women in the research area indicated that they use the money for various activities such as the payment of their children's school fees, investment in petty trading or payment of seeds or hired labour to prepare their farms for sowing, for organizing funerals and other activities. Some also indicated that *susu* money has been used to fund the initial transportation cost and settlement expenses for migrants from their households.

#### 5.5.6 Women and Formal Employment

The gender composition of occupations in the formal and informal sectors is an important indicator of the economic opportunities open to women (Oppong, 1997). Ghanaian women are highly under-represented in the formal sector, comprising only one-quarter of wage employees (Apt et al, 1998). Furthermore, within the public sector, women are concentrated in specific professions such as teaching, nursing, clerical positions and midwifery. According to the UNDP report (2004), women are two-thirds less likely than men to get waged employment, with only 3 out of 10 women in the labour force in Ghana being paid employees. Nationally, women constitute 14.3% of professional staff, 12.8% of sub-professional staff, 11.2% of technical staff and 24.3% of administrative staff (GSS, 2002). Thus in terms of participation in the workforce by gender, statistics show that overall, women are least represented in professional, sub-professional, technical and administrative areas, and are rather more concentrated in the lower secretarial pool where decisions are not taken.

Brown & Kerr (1997) assert that women's access to the formal sector is being eroded, especially in the public service. According to the authors, structural adjustment policies in the 1980s led to a reduction in government expenditure and a cut in public service employment. These measures are believed to have affected women more than men because they were applied in greater proportions to low skilled and low paid jobs, many of which are held by women (GSS, 2002a:119). Ongoing economic crises and the gulf between job creation and the growth in the number of job seekers have worsened the employment situation for women and men alike (GSS 2002c). But women face greater vulnerabilities in the labour market because of their relative lack of education and training (Ghorayshi, & Belanger, 1996; ILO, 2001). As a result of these limitations, women tend to dominate the informal sector, mainly in petty trading (GSS 2002c).

### 5.5.7 Women's Role in the Informal Sector

Informal sector activities have been traditionally underestimated in the national accounts of developing countries, particularly in SSA.<sup>119</sup> The rural informal sector as a whole is a major source of rural livelihood in Ghana, next to agriculture in terms of employment (Brydon & Legge, 1993). As described by the FAO (1987:5), "as the capacity of agriculture to generate additional livelihood progressively declines, more rural people have to turn to the informal sector."<sup>120</sup> With the contraction of formal sector jobs, the informal sector has become a "safe haven" for both men and women because of its low

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<sup>119</sup> Invariably, analysis of women's employment in Ghana is constrained by unreliable data, as well as by problems in defining what constitutes economic activity for women, principally in the informal sector.

<sup>120</sup> The informal sector is found in both rural and urban areas.

capital requirements and ease of entry (Potts, 2000:125). Activities in this sector, particularly in the rural areas are characterized by technologically simple operations, which demand limited skills and low capital, and are predominantly rural in location.

Employment within the informal sector provides an opportunity for many women to work, because access to this sector is relatively easy, even if not financially rewarding (GSS, 1986). In some cases, it can be combined with domestic responsibilities (Roca, 1994). Owning these small enterprises enables women to meet their current needs, augment their earnings from agriculture activities, and acquire resources for future investments (Ghorayshi & Belanger, 1996). However, Moser (1999) argues that in most cases, this means a much longer working day for women, who have to add this productive role to their existing reproductive and community roles. For the majority of women, participation in the informal sector is a survival strategy that is essential but more difficult to maintain as they take over more household chores and financial responsibilities when men migrate (Oppong, 1997). Women's concentration in informal employment and micro enterprises also reflects cultural barriers. Cultural norms tend to channel women into a limited range of occupations, which are usually saturated, less dynamic, and use fewer modern technologies (Awumbila, 1997).

In Ghana, women's participation in the informal sector has grown over the years, partly because of the growing incidence of female-headed households (Oppong, 1997). Employment in the informal sector has also risen in response to increased pressures on family by economic recession and SAPs (Brydon, 1987). Although women have long



been active in Ghana's small businesses, it is difficult for vast majority of them to graduate to larger business. This is because women experience greater problems than men in setting up and sustaining their own businesses (Haddad, 1991; Awumbila, 1997).

Household responsibilities are another limitation on the amount of time a woman can devote to her business, because a woman's business strategy is conditioned by time constraints and concerns about daily household welfare that male entrepreneurs need not consider (Oppong, 1997). It is clear that many women are constrained in their livelihood diversification by lack of savings, poor access to credit, as well as by the constant pressure of household responsibilities (Ardayfio-Schandorf, 1994). Hence, given Ghanaian women's predominance in small-scale industry, improving their productivity is critical to reducing poverty and achieving sustainable growth in the country.

## **5.6 Land Tenure Rights in SSA**

Land tenure and the right to land form an integral part of agricultural livelihood of women and men in SSA.<sup>121</sup> Land and land tenure issues are often gender specific as women and men experience them differently (Benneh et al., 1995). As a result, it is necessary to incorporate a gender component in any discussion related to land tenure issues. This will permit the inclusion of specific problems and constraints that characterize the land and tenure experiences of both men and women (Goldstein & Rudy,

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<sup>121</sup> Land tenure refers to a collection of rights, only some of which are held at any one time by a particular individual or social unit (Kotey & Tsikata, 1998). These range from those held by a society's political entities on down to individuals who may have their tenures secondarily from other individuals (such as family heads).

2002). In general, land tenure systems are diverse, and, therefore, defy generalizations. However, there are some common features, which if contextualized, illuminate the current problems pertaining to land tenure in SSA (Roncoli, 1985).<sup>122</sup>

In most of sub-Saharan Africa, the usufruct right to land prevails and customary land use practices often determine access to land in terms of use rights and ownership (Swindell, 1985). Access to and control over land, is mainly determined by indigenous systems of land tenure although state appropriation of land is not uncommon (Berry, 1984). This is a historically determined phenomenon, based on social membership in a land owning group. Prior to colonization in SSA, land ownership was not a hotly contested issue. In other words, Africans had no need to assert or differentiate land use rights from ownership (Amanor, 2001).

With abundant land and few competing land uses, and users, tenure was more secure and definition of land rights was viewed as a matter of course. As such, access to land by community members was often easy, and on a first come basis (Sarfo, 1987). It was only a sign of respect or for customary protocol that one had to consult with authorities in the power structure. According to Benneh et al., (1995), access to land was an inalienable right. The question of land market also did not arise, since it was unlikely that anyone would be prepared to pay for what he could easily obtain by other means

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<sup>122</sup> Disparities in male and female access to land are virtually universal. The disparity still exists even in those countries where legislation has removed gender barriers to land ownership (FAO, 1994). In Latin America, for example, men and women do not have equal access to land. In this region, as well as in the Caribbean, women's access to land and to other property generally takes place through a male relative.

(Goldstein & Urdry, 2002). Without individual ownership or land market, land that was no longer in use or abandoned, reverted to the group that held it in trust for the community.

The above discussion seems to imply a land-conflict free Africa. The contrary is rather true. Amanor (2001) asserts that land-based conflicts in Africa predate colonialism, and that conflicts have even raged over fallow land. The situation began to deteriorate further when there were increases in group membership and other forces at play in the mutually reinforcing economic, political and ecological nexus (Mabogunje, 2000). However, in spite of the long history of land-based conflicts in Africa, it is widely accepted that colonization and its attendant internationalization of African economies, fundamentally re-arranged the pre-existing land tenure systems in time and space, with consequences that extend to the present day (Abdulai, 1999).

These historical contexts underlie the contemporary complexities of the land issue and observed distribution patterns which contribute to food crisis in SSA countries (Goldstein & Urdry, 2002). Today, as manifested in the “simple reproduction squeeze”, land tenure systems are becoming more and more exclusive, as rights to land are defined more narrowly in the context of new political, social and economic conditions of various African countries (Bernstein, 1979:124). These historical contexts and their contemporary extensions can also be seen in the Ghanaian situation, to which the discussion now turns.

### 5.6.1 Land Tenure Rights of Women in Ghana

Prior to the enactment of the Administration of Lands Act, 1962 (Act 123), and by virtue of the Lands and Native Ordinance of 1927, land was placed under the control of chiefs and subject to the disposition of the government to be managed and administered for the use and common benefit of the society (Nukunya, 1975).<sup>123</sup> In practice, chiefs or religious heads administered most of the farm lands (Ollenu, 1985 cited in Kludze, 1988).<sup>124</sup> In principle, all stool subjects and lineage members regardless of sex, have inherent rights of access to these lands just described and possess what is known as the determinable interest or *usufructory* title (Ameyibor, 1993). The practice pertaining to land ownership, however, is a different story. In a predominantly matrilineal society such as Ghana, customary land use practices often determine access to land in terms of rights or ownership. This practice, however, differs among tribal groups in Ghana (Nabila, 1986). Research by the Ghana Statistical Service found that full ownership in land is most common in Ashanti where this consists of (32%), sharecropping in Brong Ahafo (58%) and pledging in the North (45%), whilst the right to the use of a husband's farmland is highest in the Volta region amounting to (55%) (GSS, 1986).

Land tenure in the Volta region is governed by the matrilineal land tenure system.<sup>125</sup>

Even where women have access to land, their security of tenure is precarious (Amanor,

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<sup>123</sup> Stools generally possess the highest title to land in Ghana known as the *Allodial Title* (Ollenu, 1985)

<sup>124</sup> In many instances, it is said that the stool occupants are owners of the land. However, this designation is given to them simply because they occupy the stool.

<sup>125</sup> Males dominate in the interconnecting political, social and economic domains, and they define the terms of access to and control over land.

2001). The customary tenure system is strictly enforced to the extent that although the ratio of females to males is higher in the general population, but more so in the rural areas, in matters pertaining to land, males are made to oversee family lands, regardless of the male/female ratio (Ameyibor, 1993). The majority of farmers in the Volta region acquire their land through family lands or inheritance, which are demarcated among family members (Kludze, 1988).<sup>126</sup> Sharing of land among numerous family members and the resultant demarcation highlights the land fragmentation issue which is a big problem in the Volta region, particularly in the Ho district (Nukunya, 1975).

Formal and informal laws tend to discriminate against women across the Volta region, making it almost impossible for women to get equal access to land as men (Kumekpor, 1971; Benneh et al., 1995). This is because usufruct right to land prevails, and customary land use practices often determine access to land in terms of rights or ownership (Goldstein & Urdry, 2002). Under customary law, women generally have limited access to land because they are not recognized as beneficiaries in terms of inheriting land. Compared to men, women lose their inheritance rights to land as soon as they marry (Manuh, 1997). Most women do not own land, although they have access to it through their husbands, fathers or adult sons. Unmarried daughters are given plots, but in situations where land is allocated to them, it is usually done only after the males in the family have made their choice (Kumekpor, 1971). The women are therefore left with the most unproductive and smaller land that tend to be further away from the village. Women usually lose the rights to land following divorce or the death of their spouse

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<sup>126</sup> Demarcation of parcels refers to the physical identification and recording of specific plots that facilitates the resolution of ownership.

(Manuh, 1984). Widows and divorced women have virtually no tenure or inheritance rights with which to ensure food security for themselves or their children (ibid).

In polygamous households, land allocation may depend on a wife's industriousness, her number in the line of other wives, the number of male children she has produced or any other whim dreamed up by her husband. As her status may change, she is not assured of the tenancy on a plot from crop to crop (Awusabo-Asare, 1990). This situation, however, does not exist to a large extent in the research community where marriage is predominantly monogamous. However, regardless of the type of marriage practiced, women are essentially temporary custodians of land, passing from father to male heir, even though they may be de-facto heads of household (Oppong, 1997). These gender inequalities in land tenure impact both on female-headed households and on female members of male-headed households (Manuh, 1984).

Traditionally in most rural areas in Ghana, women are expected to work on their husband's farms (Ameyibor, 1993). Typically, women are obligated to work as many as five days per week on the household farm and are responsible for the bulk of the planting, weeding, harvesting and post-productive tasks. The situation often leaves little time for their domestic responsibilities, private farms and other economic livelihood (Amanor, 2001). The position of customary law on this issue is that in marriage women are under an obligation to assist their husbands in the acquisition of wealth. However, customary law stipulates that such forms of assistance do not vest any proprietary rights in a wife regardless of the level of assistance (Goldstein & Urdry, 2002). In return for their

unremunerated labour contributions, wives are granted usufruct rights to a portion of their husband's lands (Manuh, 1984). This constitutes an exchange relationship between spouses whereby labour is exchanged for land. Although individual land holdings, freehold, or leasehold exist in Ghana, women's rights are equally limited, due to their limited access to financial resources. In some cases the transfer from customary to individual land holding eliminates the customary right of women to occupancy. This is because they are usually not co-registered on the land deed, and a man could henceforth sell the land without the consent of his wife (Awusabo-Asare, 1990).

Access to land, security of land tenure and sustainability are key elements in the gender, migration, land tenure and livelihood interface. This is because women cannot assume responsibility over their livelihood until they have economic security. Constraints relating to access, tenure security and sustainability impede the improvement of men's and women's productivity (Swindell, 1985). These gender disparities are likely to contribute to unintended demographic responses (Kumekpor, 1971).<sup>127</sup> The inequality in the land tenure system, coupled with migratory trends of males in the research area, has further exacerbated the problems faced by women. In view of the constant changes in demographic and land tenure conditions, there is a need for appropriate policy interventions. For instance, the socio-economic status of women are likely to change for the better if women farmers are supported through land tenure reforms as well as changes in the socio-cultural environment.

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<sup>127</sup> Socio-cultural norms and institutional arrangements accentuate women's inequality of access to land, thereby indirectly encouraging low agricultural productivity, which subsequently leads to poverty and rural-urban migration.

## 5.7 Women and Agriculture

Since the study seeks to investigate the impact of rural-urban migration on the economic livelihood of rural women in Ghana, it is imperative to discuss the role of women in agriculture because it constitutes a major component of women's livelihood in rural Ghana. This knowledge will provide an economic context for the analysis of the impact of rural-urban migration on women's livelihood in the research communities. According to FAO (2000), women produce about two-thirds of the world's food, and 50-60% of the labor input. Women's role in agriculture is growing at a faster pace than men and they are the most important actors in the food chain, which begins from farm production, and includes market and intra-household distribution of food (Mikell, 1997).<sup>128</sup>

A wide variety of literature is available on the importance of agriculture to economic development in Ghana, and on the critical role that rural women play within this sector (Awumbila & Momsen, 1995; Mikell, 1997; FAO, 2000). In Ghana, the backbone of the rural communities is the small scale farmer, the majority of who are women (Ardayfio-Schandorf & Awumbila, 2000). Women play a major role in agriculture, which includes farming, fisheries, forestry and livestock production (Benneh et al., 1996). They play a lead role in post harvest activities such as shelling of grains, storage, processing and marketing (Ameyibor, 1993). Women are also becoming increasingly visible in farm tasks which traditionally have been designated as male preserves, thus breaking ground in typical male dominated areas such as land clearance and growth of cash crops (Goldstein

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<sup>128</sup> See Bryceson (1995) for a discussion of women's agricultural work in rural in Africa. On gender perspectives about cocoa production in Ghana see Mikell (1992).



& Urdry, 2002). Women, therefore, remain the centre-piece of food security and hold the key to a sound and healthy economy.

In spite of the central role of women in agriculture, they remain the most disadvantaged population in Ghana. Women have much more limited access to resources than their male counterparts (Boserup, E. 1970). This is dominant in areas of education, land, agricultural extension, and access to credit, all of which combine to restrain the ability to increase their productivity and incomes (Awusabo-Asare, 1990). These women are the last to benefit from, or in some cases, have been negatively affected by prevailing economic growth and development processes. Gender bias and gender blindness still persist in the agricultural sector.<sup>129</sup> For example, agricultural research and investment has been focused on cash crop activities of men. Additionally, farmers are still generally perceived as “male” by policy-makers and development agencies (Swindell, 1985). Women farmers also suffer lack of recognition because their area of operation falls within the informal sector of the economy, which is largely associated with unskilled and unprofessional tasks (FAO, 2000).<sup>130</sup>

Within the informal sector, women farmers suffer from distinctions which are made between areas of “income generation” and sectors which are more passive in nature (Awumbila, 1997). Compared to men, women do not have unconditional access to the means of production. They face the problem of insecurity of tenure in land distribution

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<sup>129</sup> See Brydon and Chant (1989:94 -120)

<sup>130</sup> The inclusion of women in decision-making structures does not necessarily lead to positive changes in gender relationships. But gender analysts have shown how their involvement in all structures and levels of decision-making is a necessary condition for empowerment, emancipation and transformation. See Kabeer, 1994; Moser, 1993.

arrangements especially in situations where they farm in joint partnership with their husbands (Mikell, 1997). Formal sources of credit are difficult to obtain by rural women because of banking restrictions, bureaucracy and distances involved in obtaining loans from the bank. According to Jackson & Pearson (1998), women are more likely to be poor than men, particularly in societies where men have considerable control over women's work time, as is the case in Ghana.

Due to the lack of access to productive resources, Ghanaian women farmers constitute the poorest among the poor, and their conditions are worsened by the existing differentials in rural and urban development (Ardayfio-Schandorf, 1994). The current poverty profile of Ghana has shown that the percentage of the Ghanaian population defined as poor has fallen from 52% in 1991-1992 to just fewer than 40% in 1998-1999 (GSS, 2000b). The decline, however, is not evenly distributed geographically. Poverty reductions are concentrated in Accra and both rural and urban forest localities. In both years, poverty is substantially higher in other rural areas, including the Volta region, than urban areas, so that poverty in Ghana remains a disproportionately rural phenomenon (GS, 2002a). The literature reveals that besides Ghana's poverty and trends in poverty also relate to the economic activities in which households are engaged.

As a result of inadequate income from low agricultural productivity, most rural households adopt rural-urban migration as a coping strategy in order to diversify household livelihood (Oppong, 1987; Goldstein & Urdry, 2002). This argument is supported by Stark (1991) who asserts that relative deprivation plays an important role in

migration decisions. His findings from Mexico show that, people from relatively deprived households are more likely to engage in migration than are better-off households. As most migrants are predominantly males, women's role in agriculture is impacted upon by migration. However, regardless of the societal context in which migration occurs, it is proven to have increased the burden of work on women (Oppong, 1983; Ghorayshi & Belanger, 1996). With a shortage of labour and capital, women heads of household are often forced to make adjustments to cropping patterns (Tacoli, 2002). These adjustments have resulted in decreases in production and, in some cases, shifts towards less nutritious crops.

## **5.8 The Household Economy and the Invisible Roles of Women**

Rural women, with special reference to those in food production, engage in many “invisible” activities that affect their productive lives (Murray, 1981; Oppong & Abu, 1987). According to Oppong (1987) Ghanaian women tend to be more heavily burdened than their male counterparts across most socio-economic groups.<sup>131</sup> The drudgery that characterizes women's daily activities was clearly seen during our research. For example, most of the pre-farm activities included fetching water, cooking, serving meals and getting the children ready for school are performed by women. Scarcity of water in

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<sup>131</sup>Time use studies have shown that women work hard and for long hours both at home and outside. See Oppong and Abu (1987). Other scholars have shown that among different socio-economic groups the workload of women was still higher than that of men (Awumbila and Momsen, 1996); Women also have to use a lot of their physical energy to look for fuel wood and water in southern Ghana (Ardayfio-Schandorf, 1993). Haddad (1991) has also shown that in Ghana, because women bear a heavier responsibility for reproductive activities their time burdens are 15-25 percent more than those of men.

rural areas, for example, also compels women to spend several hours looking for water for their households.

With the exception of some areas in Northern region where the gender division of labour requires men to look for firewood, this role is largely reserved for women who spend long hours in search of firewood for cooking (Ardayfio-Schandorg, 1994). Meanwhile, they are expected to perform their farm duties after completing these off-farm activities (Oppong & Abu, 1987). Women with pre-school children also spoke about their engagement in “simultaneous domestic and farm work” due to the absence of pre-school facilities in their communities. This situation compels most women to take the children to the farms.

Another activity that is often overlooked is the sale of farm produce (Awusabo-Asare, 1990). Generally speaking, women are also responsible for transporting farm produce to the market centers. This is often done by head-loading, which is also not computed as an economic activity. Food processing is also a common feature of women’s off-farm activities. Women are noted for making palm oil, gari and other farm-related products (Oppong, 1987). The challenge facing government and policymakers is to establish required policy frameworks and strategies to ensure real change in the lives of both women and men in rural areas.

## 5.9 Conclusion

This chapter has tried to set the background to an analysis of the relationship between gender, migration and rural livelihood in Ghana. Using a historical perspective, it discussed the changes in gender relations and the socio-economic status of Ghanaian women through time. The chapter notes the existence of gender inequities in the society, and examined factors that have impacted the lives of Ghanaian women. At the rural level, Ghanaian women are the main socio-economic backbone of the economy. They prepare the land, work the fields, feed and meet other family needs (Bukh, 1979). Yet in spite of the contribution these women make to the Ghanaian economy, gender disparities continue to be prevalent in the society (Akinboade, 1999). The gender imbalance is also evident in the societal division of labor, and lack of access to resources, which compel women to take greater responsibilities and manage heavier workloads than the men.

The study maintains that there is a need to understand the gender relations in the society, which underpins the economic and social status of women. This will enable policymakers to formulate gender inclusive policies. Without an adequate policy environment, the productivity of women can be thwarted by inadequate government management and lack of incentives for achieving an optimum welfare of the rural population. Although Ghana has made some progress towards achieving development in some areas of the society and economy in the last two decades, gender inequities continue to limit women's capabilities and constrain their ability to participate fully in development (Hutchful, 1997). It is important, therefore, to empower women and

promote an equitable and fair distribution of resources in order to enhance rural livelihood in the midst of continued internal migration.

## CHAPTER 6

### ON THE SHORES OF THE ATLANTIC COAST OF WEST AFRICA

Although people living in rural areas tend to adapt their way of life to local conditions, they are beset perpetually by a harsh material environment, among other problems. West Africa is hot, extremely humid in the coastal and forest regions and dry in the interior. The people suffer from endemic diseases which in some cases, such as river blindness, impair the productivity of whole communities. Soils are light and easily eroded by heavy rains, and the forest is dense (UNECA, 1998). Rivers are not conducive to navigation, and overland transport has been slow and difficult to develop in some communities. The forest areas have few domestic animals and trees are scarce on the savannah. These conditions, which remained almost unchanged for several millennia, are still relevant today.<sup>132</sup>

Added to the above situation is the regional and rural-urban disparity development, as is the case in Ghana. Death and mortality rates, infant mortality, and illiteracy, particularly amongst women, are generally higher in rural than urban areas. They also tend to be higher in regions that are less endowed with natural resources. For instance, villages are far less likely to have adequate water supplies, let alone the convenience of pipe-borne water. Electricity services have been slow to reach rural areas, and the villages which ask to be connected must make substantial contribution to its installation before it can be done. Good access roads to villages are lacking, making it difficult for farmers to market their produce, or to receive the goods they need from town. It follows that the access to services is limited by these and other considerations. Services especially intended for rural areas do not reach the more remote or isolated communities. Services in rural areas have, therefore, not kept pace with those in towns. Employment opportunities have been lacking, leading to poverty and subsequently migration, which has deprived rural communities of working age population, particularly men.<sup>133</sup>

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<sup>132</sup> Ewusi 1987; Todaro, 1989

<sup>133</sup> The second paragraph is a summary of my observations of the Abutia communities and other villages that we visited in the Ho district during our 6 month stay in Abutia Kloe. It is my research Journal Entry for March 4th, 2006.

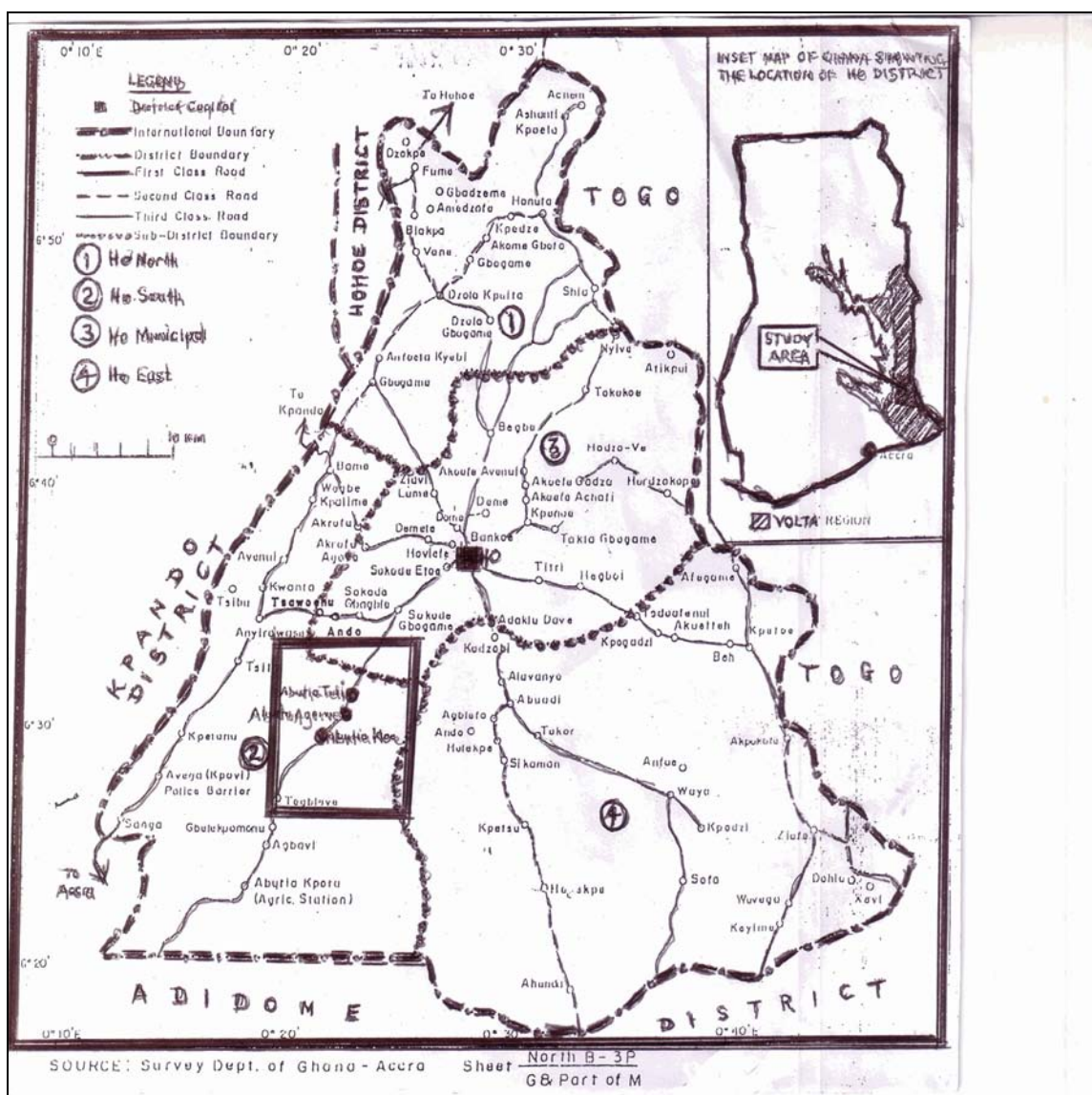
**MAP 6.1 ADMINISTRATIVE REGIONS IN GHANA  
SHOWING THE VOLTA REGION**



**MAP 6.2 ADMINISTRATIVE DISTRICTS IN THE VOLTA REGION**







## 6.1 Introduction

Ghana's ethnic diversity makes generalizations about gender relations difficult because the experiences of Ghanaian women are diverse (Nabila, 1986). Therefore, in order to understand the context within which this discussion is located, it is important to familiarize oneself with the geographical and socio-cultural profile of the country under study, since culture and traditional practices shape gender relations in any society (Ansu-Kyeremeh, 1997; Abdulai, 1999). This chapter presents the environment within which rural-urban migration occurs in Ghana.

Beginning with the Volta region, the chapter explores the geographical, historical, political, socio-economic, cultural, and demographic background of the region, then moves on to the Ho district, and lastly, discusses the Abutia villages.<sup>134</sup> Such comprehensive knowledge is fundamental to understanding the struggle of the rural people to overcome the limitations of a hostile environment, as well as other daily challenges they face, which have contributed to low economic productivity and rural-urban migration. This background information also allows us to situate the Abutia villages within a broader socio-economic context. However, only selected topics are discussed. This was done deliberately to avoid repetition, since the contextual information on the region and district mirror each other.

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<sup>134</sup> There are more than 90 ethnic groups in Ghana, but it is possible to classify them into two major language groups: The Kwa linguistic group embraces almost all of the population of southern Ghana while northern Ghana is inhabited by the Gur linguistic group. Within the Kwa linguistic group, the Akan are in the majority accounting for 44.2% of the total population. The Ewe, whose geo-ethnic centre is in the Volta region, account for 13.3% of the total population (GOG/UNICEF, 1990). Some 62% of the sample also understands English.

## 6.2 A Brief Profile of the Volta Region

The Volta region is located in the eastern part of Ghana, sharing its eastern boundary with Togo, the northern boundary with the Northern region, and the south is bordered by the Atlantic shoreline. The western boundary is shared by Eastern and Brong Ahafo regions (Ameyibor, 1993). The region was named after the Volta River, which runs through the entire length of the region. As is the case in all other parts of the country, the Volta Region has a tropical climate (Amanor, 1999). Although almost every ethnic group is represented in the region, there are eight major ethnic groups. The main ethnic group in the region is the Ewe, consisting of 68.5% of the population, followed by the Guan 9.2%, the Akan 8.5% and the Gurma 6.5% (GSS, 2000).<sup>135</sup> The region has substantial expanses of land. However, only an estimated 1,028,500 hectares are suitable for general agriculture, that is, the cultivation of crops and rearing of animals (Kludze, 1988). The limitation is due to the fact that some soils are unsuitable for cultivation.

The region used to be one of the country's major cocoa growing areas, mainly in the northern districts of Hohoe, Jasikan, Kadjebi and Nkwanta (Amedekey, 1970). It was the cocoa industry that made Hohoe a very important commercial town. It was the capital of the Trans-Volta Togoland before the capital was removed to Ho (Dei-Anang, 1964). The cocoa industry has, however, declined over the years as a result of

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<sup>135</sup> The Ewes share common legend of origin and a common language of which the local variations are commonly understandable throughout the greater part of the region. The Ewe and Fon, the language of southern Benin are very similar. This linguistic association therefore, tends to support the theory of the Ewe's migration from the East. All the ethnic groups surrounding Abutia - the Akan, Krobo, Ga, Ada and Ewe are said to have lived together. Each one occupied a different ward of the town and their respective languages, already differentiated, were nevertheless mutually intelligible.

agronomic and political problems. Currently, only 29% of the total arable land of the region is under cultivation (Kludze, 1988). The majority of the population, about 59.7%, are engaged in agriculture and related occupations (Amanor, 1999; FAO, 2000).

### 6.2.1 The Political History of Eweland

Most of the region north of Ho, with the exception of the south-most part, was part of the German colony of Togoland. The southern-most part was first colonized by the Danes, and later on transferred to the British. It was administered as part of the Gold Coast, now Ghana (Amanor, 1999). After the defeat of the Germans in World War I, the German colony of Togoland was partitioned. One portion was placed under the protectorate of Britain and became known as the British Togo. The other, under French protectorate, became the French Togo, now the Republic of Togo (Amenumey, 1986). While Togoland was under French Trusteeship and administered by its own Governor appointed by the French, the British protectorate of Togoland, was administered by the Governor of the Gold Coast who reported on the British protectorate directly to the Trusteeship Council of the League of Nations, now the United Nations (Kludze, 1988).

In 1954, the U.N sent a Visiting Team to the British Togoland. This team recommended a plebiscite to be held in 1956 to decide on the wishes of the people on the issues of whether the Trust Territory should be integrated into, or secede from, the Gold Coast. The result of this plebiscite was not decisive (Amenumey, 1986). However, when it became clear that the Gold Coast was to become independent in 1957, the British

Government formally informed the Trusteeship Council that it would not be possible for Britain to administer the British Protectorate, then called the Trans-Volta Togoland (TVT) separately, after the Gold Coast became independent (Kludze, 1988). The British Government, therefore, recommended that the Trans Volta Togoland be integrated into the Gold Coast. This suggestion did not go down well with a portion of the people, particularly Ewe speakers, who opted in the plebiscite to join the French Togo, which then attained the status of an “autonomous republic” (Kuenyehia, 1992).

After independence, the Parliament of Ghana adopted a resolution to merge and integrate the Trans Volta Togo with Ghana, under the name Volta Region (Amenumey, 1986). The structure of the decentralized administrative system of the region is made up of the Regional Coordinating Council and the District Assembly (Amanor, 2001). The Regional Co-ordinating Council (RCC) comprises the Regional Minister who is the overall political head of the region, his Deputy, representatives of the Regional House of Chiefs, the District Chief Executives of the region, the Presiding Members of the 15 Districts Assemblies, and representatives of the various decentralized ministries, departments and agencies (MDAS). The Regional Co-ordinating Council is headed by the Regional Coordinating Director, who acts as the Secretary to the RCC, and has the overall responsibility for the local government administration of the region (Owusu, 2005).

### 6.2.2 Socio-cultural Overview of the Volta Region

The region is predominantly rural, with about 1,298 rural communities and a population ranging between 75 and 5,000 people. The total rural population is estimated at 1,316,248 people (GSS, 2002). The population is predominantly agricultural, consisting mainly of poor subsistence farmers who depend on unreliable rainfall patterns for the growth of their crops (Kumekpor, 1971). The region is one of the poorest in the country, with its unreliable seasonal rainfall, lack of natural resources, absence of any large scale industrial activities, lack of rural infrastructure and general neglect by government. The region is relatively inaccessible, being poorly serviced by all-weather roads and having as its main access, the tarred roads between the district capitals and the national capital. There is absence of any large-scale industrial activities and lack of rural infrastructure, a situation that is attributed by many to neglect by successive governments (Kludze, 1988).

It has been discussed in many circles that due to the unique historical position of the Volta region as trans-Volta Togoland, it was deliberately discriminated against in terms of resource allocation (Amedekey, 1970). This under-investment in the development of the region and its people is said to have begun during the colonial period. The process continued post-independence, and as a result, the Volta region has remained one of the least endowed regions (Awumbila, 2001). The imbalance of natural resource distribution in the regions, coupled with lack of employment and poverty has motivated the people in the region to focus on education as the single most important resource, and to take advantage of every educational opportunity within and outside the region (Kumekpor,

1971). The people from the Volta region are, therefore, noted for their high ambition for education, and the acquisition of both skilled and semi-skilled labour, relative to the rest of the country. However, despite the educational ambition of people from the Volta region, there are limited job opportunities for them within the region. As a result, most of them travel to other parts of the country in search of better employment opportunities. People from the Volta region, therefore, continue to provide both skilled and semi-skilled labour for the developed coastal zone as well as the farming and building industries in other parts of the country.

The non-existence of government subsidies on inputs such as fertilizers and seeds has significantly reduced agricultural production and rural incomes. Other indicators point to the degree of under-development and poverty in the region. For example, there is no university in the Volta region, and senior secondary schools can only be found in the relatively bigger towns, thereby making education inaccessible to the vast number of people in the rural areas. Literacy rate in the rural areas of the region is 38%, which is among the lowest in Ghana, with the average level of literacy being 63% (GSS, 2002a). The existence of high poverty in the region has subsequently led to high mortality rates and poor nutritional status. Under-nutrition in children under five years is one of the highest, and maternal and infant mortality continues to be high in the region (WHO, 2004). Rural women and children, disabled people and landless people are further disadvantaged by exclusion from social, economic and political life (Brydon, 1989).<sup>136</sup>

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<sup>136</sup> The Volta region has predominant patrilineal system whereby inheritance and descent occurs through the father's lineage. In matrilineal systems however, inheritance is through the mother. In both systems women are discriminated against, though the form of discrimination may differ. See Brydon and Chant

Despite the Ghanaian economy having grown in recent years, the people of the Volta region, and especially rural households, have not shared any of the improvement, and are actually worse off than at the beginning of the decade (Asibuo, 2000). This state of affairs has impacted negatively on all facets of the region's economy, which accounts for the perpetuation of the historical migration of people from the region. Today, one can find at least three generations of migrants from the Volta region in any given village, town or city (Kuenyehia, 1998).

### **6.3 The Ho District**

The Ho district is one of the fifteen administrative districts of the Volta region. It covers an area of about 2660 sq km and shares boundaries with the Hohoe district in the north, Kpandu district and part of the Eastern region on the west, North Tongu and the Akatsi districts in the south and on the east by the Republic of Togo (HDA, 2006). The district is divided into sub-districts or local authorities, which include Ho North, Ho South, Ho East, Ho municipal and Ho West. By its position, the district shares common development aspirations and resources with the surrounding areas in the district, including the Abutia villages where the research was undertaken.<sup>137</sup>

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(1989:51-54) for a discussion of kinship systems and the patrilineal and matrilineal systems of inheritance and descent.

<sup>137</sup> See attached maps 6:1 and 6:2 on the two pages preceding chapter 6. Map 6:1 shows the country of Ghana and the Volta Region. Map 6:2 shows the Ho district and the research communities of Abutia Teti, Agorve and Kloe.



### 6.3.1 Geography and Relief of the Ho District

The relief of the district can be divided into two main physical regions. These are the northern highland and the southern lowland. The northern highland mainly consists of mountainous areas, with low relief limited to the valleys of the major streams. The major relief feature in the northern sector of the Ho District forms part of the Togo range, which is an extension of the Akwapim range of the Eastern region (Kludze, 1988). The mountainous area stretches from Awudome to Avatime and Ashanti-Kpoeta. The southern lowland forms part of the Accra-Keta plains (HDA, 2005).

### 6.3.2 Climate and Vegetation

Rainfall in the district is characterized by a major rainfall season that is normally from March to June with a break from July to August, and then the minor second rainfall season starts from September to November (Swindell, 1985). The harmattan season occurs from December to February. The northern sector has a double rainy season, while the southern sector on the other hand, experiences a single rainy season (Kuenyehia, 1992). The temperature throughout the year is high, except in the mountainous areas such as Amedzofe, Biakpa and Vane where temperatures are relatively lower. At best, the vegetation in the northern sector, which is related to the rainfall pattern, can be described as moist semi-deciduous forest. Some of the tree species include isolated wawa and mahogany as well as the borassus palm (Kumekpor, 1971). Vegetation in the southern sector on the other hand, is generally a guinea savanna woodland type. Crops

grown in the northern part of the district include perennial crops like cocoa, oil palm, coffee, plantain and banana, while crops grown in the southern sector consists of maize, cassava, yam, groundnuts and legumes. Forest conservation is practiced in the district, and there are forest reserves at four locations which are the Ho Hills, Kabakaba Hills, Abutia Hills and Klemu Headwaters (HDA, 2006).

### 6.3.3 Population

The Ho district is the second most populated district in the region, with 772 communities. These communities, however, are predominantly rural, with only 18% being urban. About 94% of the people living in the Ho district are Ewes, and 6% consists of other ethnic groups (GSS, 2000b). The district had a total population of 240,903 in 2000, constituting 14.4% of the total population of the Volta region (GSS 2002a). Females constitute 51.8% of the population in the district, while males are 48.2% of the population. The average annual population growth rate for the district is estimated at 1.17%, which is below that of the national figure of 2.7% and the regional average of 1.7% (GSS 2002a). The only fast growing urban centre is Ho, with an annual population growth rate of 3.1%. Kpedze was the second largest town in the district in 1970, with a population of 5,062. However in 2000, the town ranked fourth, with a population of 5,279 and a growth rate of 0.06% (GSS 2002c). This low growth rate can be attributed to people migrating from the district, and is a pattern that is seen across the entire region.

## 6.4 Ho – The Double Capital Town

The town of Ho is both the Volta regional capital as well as the district capital. It is, therefore, the seat of the District Assembly.<sup>138</sup> The town has a total population of 233,524, with a relatively large group of youth residing in the area (GSS 2000a). It is predominantly Ewe speaking.<sup>139</sup> Ho is noted for its disproportionately large number of educational institutions in the region. Farming is the traditional occupation, but the educational institutions offer employment to a sizeable segment of the population. The town is also known for its commercial activities; there is a thriving periodic market, one of the largest in the region, which runs on a (4) day basis attracting not only people in the region, but also from Kpalime, Akpadafe and Atakpame all in the Republic of Togo, due to the nearness of the town to the Togolese border.

### 6.4.1 Local Government and Decision-Making

Ghana changed from the Local Authority system of administration to the District Assembly system in 1988, in order to achieve the goal of greater local governance (Asibuo, 2000:7). The national government established district assemblies in the various regions, demarcating 110 districts out of the existing 138 local authorities. Both the Ho

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<sup>138</sup>District Assemblies are required to prepare development plans as a means of attracting investment opportunities. It is also seen as a way of achieving the objectives of government policy as contained in the document Ghana: Vision 2020' (1997).

<sup>139</sup>Nukunya (1975) postulates that some of the Ewe groups settled in the south, along the coast, whilst others took refuge in the mountain ridges north of the coastal plain, where they mingled with pockets of other refugee groups of various ethnic origins such as the Avatime people (Nukunya, 1975).

District and the Ho District Assembly were established under the Local Government Law Act 462 of the 1992 Fourth Republic Constitution. The objective is the “decentralization of government,” which seeks to transfer the power and functions of governance, from the central government to the district assemblies (GOG, 1992).

At the local level, the district assemblies are supposed to be structured and composed in a way that ensures that the range of communities in the districts is represented (Asibuo, 2000:9). According to the law, a district assembly must consist of the following persons: the district chief executive; one person from each electoral area within the district; the member or members of parliament from the constituencies that fall within the district assembly (such members do not have voting rights); other persons not exceeding 30 per cent of the total membership of the Assembly appointed by the president in consultation with interested groups in the district (GOG, 1992).

The key issue is to appoint people who are knowledgeable on specific issues that are relevant to the community (Asibuo, 2000).<sup>140</sup> However, while the government recognizes the relevance of women’s knowledge and involvement, there are no specific provisions to ensure that there is adequate representation of women in local government decision-making processes (HDA, 2006). In Ghana, many women are unlikely to come forward on their own to take up leadership positions. This is due to the existence of structural inequalities, which work to keep women in subordinate positions even in situations where they are willing to make a contribution in public affairs (ISSER, 1998).

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<sup>140</sup>This topic is elaborated upon in the next section.

For example, at the national level in the 2001 parliament of 200 people, only 14 were women. A similar situation exists at the local level where traditional views of patriarchy are even more entrenched (HDA, 2006). It is therefore important that more women be nominated to the district assembly.

The Ho District Assembly constitutes the local government in the district, and has a total of eighty two persons. This consists of the District Chief Executive (DCE) who is also the head of the assembly, and fifty four persons representing fifty four electoral areas. These are elected directly by the electorate (HDA, 2006:5). There are also about twenty seven persons comprising the traditional authorities or their representatives, and other persons ordinarily resident within the areas of the District Council. These people are appointed by the Council in consultation with the traditional authorities and civil society in the District. These aim at achieving the hopes and aspirations of the people in the district within the framework of a decentralized system of local government (ibid: 6).

The District Assemblies have legislative and executive functions (Asibuo, 2000:12). They are mandated “to exercise political and administrative authority in the districts, provide guidance, give direction, and supervise all other administrative authorities in the district” (GOG, 1992). The district assemblies also plan for all the activities in the district, and liaison between the assembly and the Regional Coordinating Council (RCC). They also promote and support productive activities and social development in the district by removing all impediments to rural development (HDA, 2006).

At the grassroots level, the District Assembly works through the Unit Committees. The functions of Unit Committees are subsequently classified into categories of services namely protective, environmental, public and personal as well as development services (Asibuo, 2000). Protective services as provided by local authorities, seek to protect the citizenry against lawlessness and to maintain public order. Institutions like the Ghana National Fire Service and City guards are some of the units put in place for that purpose. The environmental services are designed to secure and improve the surroundings of citizens (HDA, 2006:7). Others are public health services, which include the inspection and abatement of nuisance, clearing of drainage and sewerage disposal.

The services provided by Unit Committees seek to promote the well-being of the individuals in the district.<sup>141</sup> They include the provision of welfare services like parks for the use of citizens. Other significant services that the district assemblies provide include development services. These services are important to people in the district because ultimately, the essence of development is best manifest in the ability of the people to live fuller lives and to have power over their destinies (Asibuo, 2000:13). In order to make any significant impact on the lives of its people, however, there is the urgent need for the mobilization of resources. However, the Ho District Assembly is unable to effectively mobilize local financial resources because there are very limited sources of employment to generate income for the people. This subsequently reduces the tax base of the district

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<sup>141</sup> This was derived from an interview with Togbe Ayikpe IV, Chief of Abutia Kloe in February, 2006. In the interview the chief explained that the chief explained that the Assembly discusses all decision-making issues with him while he in turn advises them. His direct functions in the community however, have become more focused on settling social disputes, particularly those about marital relationships.

assembly. The lack of financial resources further leads to inadequate infrastructural development, unemployment and poverty (HDA, 2006:7).



PLATE 6.1: The principal researcher, one research assistant and community guide in Abutia Teti.

## 6.5 The Abutia Villages

“Madam, look at these three Abutia villages and tell me what you see.....nothing but lack of jobs, unemployment and very severe poverty. There is no water, no sanitation, no markets and only one senior secondary-technical school for the three villages. Although the villages are so close to Ho, they are very isolated. Sometimes we feel that we are not part of this country because we are not included in things that happen in this country.....”<sup>142</sup>

<sup>142</sup>Mr. Agyeman (Retired Assistant Director of Education, Abutia Kloe). He was interviewed as Key Informant through an In-depth interview on January 23, 2006

### 6.5.1 Climate and Vegetation

The Abutia villages occupy an area well within the Equatorial climatic zone, and are characterized by two rainy seasons every year. The heavier rains start in March and last until June-July, followed by a shorter rainy season which begins in September and ends in early November (HDA, 2006). The temperature is very hot and humid, and the soils are tropical black earth of the coastal savanna zone. The peneplain around the hills is covered with savanna woodland, where perennial grasses predominate, and is dotted here and there with thickets (Verdon, 1983). On the hills and in some of the thickets, however, the vegetation is similar to secondary forest. One can thus look upon Abutia as straddling two ecological zones, that is the woodland savanna in the plain, and the secondary forest on the hills and in some places in the plain. Parts of this large area belonging to the Abutia people consists of hunting grounds, and the actual portion claimed as farmlands does not exceed 60 to 70 square miles, yielding a population density of approximately 40-50 people to the square mile (HDA, 2006). Although it may seem high for a savannah area, this density is low for this part of Ewe land.

The local inhabitants see their land as rich and plentiful and they do not recall having ever suffered from either famine or land shortages (Verdon, 1983). Considering their farming methods and the portion of land actually farmed, their claim that the land can support much more than the present population, does seem plausible. So pressure on land is not necessarily a push factor for migration in Abutia. It is rather other factors such as



lack of rain, lack of access to resources and inadequate farming methods that combine to affect agricultural productivity.

### 6.5.2 Physical Location of the Abutia Villages

The Abutia villages of Teti, Agorve and Kloe in the Ho district are located at the foot of the Abutia Hills. These three villages form a separate division, deriving their unity from a common myth of origin. They share boundaries with Adaklu in the East, and the river Kalakpa serving as the main boundary with Mafi and Adaklu. In the south, the land extends as far as the river Volta. And the north, they are bordered by the river Tsawe which separates Abutia from Awudome and Sokode (Verdon, 1983). Unlike other Ewe-Dome villages in the mountains to the north, the Abutias never settled on their Hills.<sup>143</sup>

The Abutia people have very vast land that stretches from the Volta River to the Adaklu mountains (Kumekpor, 1991). In fact, Abutia's location in Ewe land is somewhat unique, occupying as it does the southernmost tip of Ewe land, and half surrounded by southern Tongu divisions. This specific exceptional location may account for the vastness of Abutialand, in contrast to the much smaller territories of most other northern divisions (Verdon, 1983). The southern half of Abutia land probably remained unoccupied in the early years of settlement to serve as a buffer zone against possible invasions from the south.

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<sup>143</sup> The Abutias, however, lived on the Agbenu Hills in earlier times.

The land was acquired through their early migratory settlement and wars. The southern half of Abutia land probably remained unoccupied in the early years of settlement to serve as a buffer zone against possible invasions from the south (Kludze, 1988). Some archival documents show the Abutia conquered a greater part of their land during the historical war between Dorfor and the Akwamus over the land in 1937 (GOG, 1992). After the war, the Abutia people signed a bond with Awudome and Sokode confirming the position of the Abutias as the original owners of the land. This same bond also defined the boundaries in 1918. This historic event became known as the *bond of 1918* (Dzobo, 1975).

The three villages are the only indigenous villages of Abutia, and are located about one to two miles from each other. The northernmost village where the Paramount Chief resides is called Abutia Teti, which is the second largest village in Abutia. Teti used to host Abutia's main marketplace, where women traders convened from neighbouring villages every four days (HDA, 2006). However, the marketplace has since collapsed. During our research in 2005-2006, there was no market in any of the indigenous Abutia villages. Three quarters of a mile south of Teti lays the village of Agorve. This is the smallest of the three Abutia villages. Agorve boasts of the shrine of the Abutia high god, a privilege which gives it a paramount role in traditional religious affairs. Kloe is located one and a half miles south of Agorve. This is the village where we settled and carried out the fieldwork in the three villages. Kloe is the largest of the three villages and enjoys the largest number of services. Additionally, it also has the largest number of educated migrants.

Michel Verdon (1983) asserts that all three villages are still located on the same site on which they were discovered by German missionaries in 1888. We found this assertion to be true, in that although some villages have relocated since they were formed the Abutia villages remain in the same location. However, although Michelle Verdon, writing in 1983 argued that the villages have not developed since they were formed, we found during discussions with villagers that the three villages have expanded and developed since they were established, albeit within a limited scope. The expansion of the villages is attributed predominantly to migrant remittances, since agricultural income is inadequate even for household consumption.

A second class road, linking Sokode Gbogame and Juapong runs centrally through all three villages, almost dividing the villages in two equal parts and stringing them together on an almost straight line (Verdon, 1983). This tarred (second class) road, however, only ends at Kloe, turning into an untarred and almost impassable road that links Kloe to Juapong. As a result of the terrible road conditions, only very few vehicles travel the full length of the road. Most of the vehicles from Ho stop at Kloe and return to Ho with very few continuing to the Doffor area. Therefore, in order to reach Accra, people from Abutia join a vehicle to Ho, and then travel from Ho to Accra, instead of travelling directly to Juapong and from Juapong to Accra. Apart from the dissecting main road, the villages are also divided by streets, which also serve to delineate clan areas.

Houses in the three villages are built very close to one another, and no farming is practiced on the village site. Contrary to the norm in southern Volta among the Anlo, no fences separate the houses in Abutia. The Abutia people show a preference for building their schools and churches on the Hills and also on the outskirts of the villages. The Evangelical Presbyterian church and both the Primary and Middle Schools are built outside the main settlements, at the periphery of the villages.

Each village has a public open area shaded by an enormous tree, which serves to “open up” the settlement. These shaded public places are used for daily trading in farm products or as an assembly point for important village meetings. The area is also dotted with specially designed stones which serve as chairs, and are used by men in their evening rest. Every village also has at least one main store and a drinking bar or “spot,” both of which serve as rallying-points for youths and men. The section now turns to the puzzling presence of settler villages on Abutia land.

### 6.5.3 Abutia Settler Villages

Both historical and contemporary literature reveals that due to the Abutias ownership of vast land, they often gave land to other settlers such as the Tongu and Anlos (Nukunya, 1969; HDA, 2006).<sup>144</sup> According to Verdon (1986), the Abutias began selling their land

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<sup>144</sup>Part of this section also consists of a narrative obtained from Togbe Ayikpe, chief of Abutia Kloe. Michel Verdon, in his Book, *The Abutia Ewes of West Africa*, asserted that the Abutias had sold their land to their neighbours, the Tongu and Anlo settlers. Togbe Ayikpe however, insisted that the lands were given to the settlers out of generosity, simply because the Abutia the villages have a vast expanse of land and could afford to part with some. Whether the land was sold or given for free, this process explains the puzzling presence of immigrant villages.

to their southern Tongu neighbours more than a century ago. This information explains the puzzling presence of an immigrant village (Abutia Kpota) and of other migrant villages and hamlets on Abutia soil, some of which have been allegedly inhabited since 1860 (ibid). The people from Tongu are among the first prominent settlers in Abutia. The first Tongu settlers on Abutia land are the Battor people who settled at Abutia Agordeke. Some members of this group are said to have migrated a second time and settled at Abutia Kpoeta. Another faction of the people from Battor together with a group from Anlo settled also at Kissiflui. The next groups of settlers were people from Bakpa and Mepe who settled at Kpolukope (HDA, 2006).

According to Verdon (1983), another group of Tongus from Bakpa and Mafi were also given land by the Abutia chiefs and they settled at Amesinyakope and Tedeafenui. Some people from Doffor also settled at Avedotue, while other people from Mepe settled at Agortive and Avetakpo. The people of Dzroawode were given a portion of land that has been designated as a Forest Reserve within Abutia Kloe. They continue to live in the middle of the forest reserve, while awaiting compensation and resettlement by the government. The research team had the opportunity to visit many of these villages, some of which are very small and can only qualify as hamlets. However, an important thread that weaves between both the indigenous and settler villages of Abutia is the inadequacy of infrastructure, low agricultural productivity, lack of alternative forms of employment, extreme poverty and a resultant out migration of people from the villages.

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Kpota and its neighbouring hamlets are completely independent from the three indigenous Abutia villages, and are only linked to them as result of their geographical location or proximity. This is true to such an extent that Eweland's north-south separation is reduplicated within Abutia's boundaries itself. The immigrants are of the opinion that since their ancestors purchased their land from the Abutia chiefs, they do not owe anything to the original owners. Their settlement never integrated into the traditional or Abutia political organization. They are only indirectly integrated nowadays, through the national political organization. Immigrants and original owners exchange very little, and there are no intermarriages. Some respondents interviewed attributed the situation to the variations or differences, albeit rather minimal, which exist among the Ewes. These variations which are not so obvious, are seen in the dialect and culture among Southern and Northern Ewes.



PLATE 6.2: Meeting with a household in Kissiflui, one of the Abutia settler villages.

## 6.6 The Migratory History of the Abutia People

Apart from the *Abutia Ewes of West Africa* written by Michel Verdon in 1983, there is no other known monograph that is written exclusively on the people of Abutia. As a result of the limited literature available, the bulk of the information on the migratory history of the Abutias was obtained from the Chief of Abutia Kloe, Togbe Ayikpe IV and his council of elders, at a meeting that was specifically convened for this purpose.<sup>145</sup> Where applicable, the narrative has been supplemented by information from Michel Verdon's book. The migratory history must, therefore, be read bearing its predominantly oral source in mind.<sup>146</sup>

Togbe Kwame Ayikpe IV, chief of Abutia started his narrative by tracing the history of the Abutia to a town in the current Republic of Togo. The chief stated that at the time of the initial migration from Notsie, the Abutia people formed a sub-group of the Ewe-dome people or Northern Volta. He stated that the Ewe-dome people, together with the two other groups of Ewe people, known as the Tongu and Anlo, derive their origin from Notsie, a village in south-eastern Togo. He stated that the town was walled and lay under the tyrannical rule of a wicked chief named Togbui Agorkoli. Due to the harsh conditions and impossible demands made by the chief, the Ewes fled from Notsie. Togbe

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<sup>145</sup> A meeting with some members of the Ho Regional House of Chiefs confirmed some parts of the narrative and disputed other parts. All this variations in account are incorporated in the narrative. The research team also observed some variations between Verdon's monograph and literature by some Ghanaian ethnographers. The chief of Abutia Kloe indicated that he remembered Michel Verdon living in their village during the 1970s when he was a young man.

<sup>146</sup> The migratory history was narrated to us in March 2006 by Togbe Ayipe VI, the Chief of Abutia Kloe and Torgbe Tuga Kanda the stool father of Abutia Kloe. Togbe Ayipe VI was born in 1935, and enstooled on 18<sup>th</sup> September, 1968. Torgbe Tuga Kanda was born on May 20<sup>th</sup>, 1926.

Ayikpe IV continued that the Abutia people, who were then known as Yorviawo, together with people from Volo and Adaklu, migrated together as one large group over a long period of time. The group finally settled at a place called Torvledu, which is near the present day Battor. However, water was very scarce at their new location, and as a result there was continuous fighting among the settlers. Due to the numerous quarrels, the Abutia people migrated and moved inland from Torvledu, leaving behind the people from Volo. The Battor people on the other hand, crossed the river and settled on the southern bank, where they still live at the present time.

The chief stated that on migrating from Torvledu, the Abutia people were led by an ancestor and warrior called Agbeme and a group of selected warrior scouts, until they reached a mountain about five miles southeast of the Abutia hills. Due to the prevailing wars of the time, they settled on top of the hill in order to be protected from enemy tribes. However some time after their settlement the Abutias split into two groups. The first group continued their migrated to the current location. The second group, consisting of a warrior named Foli and his followers, left to explore the northern lands and never returned. The people who migrated with Foli became known as the Fodome people. The people of Abutia and Fodome are, therefore, of the same ancestral lineage and have established a yearly festival at which they celebrate their common ancestry.<sup>147</sup>

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<sup>147</sup> The research team witnessed this well-attended festival during our stay in the village.



According to Togbe Ayikpe, the Abutias formerly consisted of about 38 communities of the same original ancestral lineage. However, six major tribal wars with their neighbours in the south took their toll, eventually leaving them with only three villages consisting of the current three indigenous Abutia villages of Teti, Agorve and Kloe. One elder continued that when the Abutia people reached the Agbenu mountain, which is southwest of the Abutia hills, they remained in that location for a period of time. During their stay on the Agbenu hills, the three villages were said to have occupied one common settlement and operated as “one large family,” despite their separate identities as separate and distinct villages.<sup>148</sup>

Their location on top of the mountains offered them protection from their enemies. However, as a result of the lack of water on the mountain, the Abutia people were forced to migrate one more time. Upon discovering the river Ayiwa, they settled at the northern part of the river, a decision that gave them access to adequate water supply. Although they had access to water, the Abutia people felt they were exposed to their enemies by settling on the lowlands (Verdon, 1983). As a result they moved yet again from Ayiwata to Agbenutodzi hill, which is not very far from their present location. By this move, however, they once again sacrificed access to water for security. This is because water was scarce on the hill, and the Abutia women had to always descend the hill to fetch

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<sup>148</sup>The Abutia possibly migrated from the Agbenu to the Abutia Hills at the time they freed themselves from the Akwamu in 1834. It was indeed quite common in West Africa to find people taking refuge on mountain tops to protect themselves against slave-raiding. As their rulers, the Akwamu should have promoted peace in northern Eweland, but they failed to do so, and indulged freely in rather kidnapping some people and selling them into slavery. After their successful rebellion under the Kpeki head, the Abutia might have wished to settle closer to the Kpeki and moved to the Abutia hills.

water. The chief admitted that ascending and descending the hill numerous times a day with a heavy load of water must have been rather tedious for the women.

According to the chief, the Abutia women complain a lot that they were tired of ascending and descending the hill to fetch water. The phrase used for such complain in the Ewe-dome language was “*Abua lialia ti mi.*” The Abutia people became identified by the incessant complaining of their women, and over time, this phrase became corrupted into the word *Abutia*, which subsequently became the identification and name of the people. As a result of the difficulties of the women and their complaints during this phase of the migration, the Abutia community eventually migrated one more time from the hill of Agbenutodzi. They descended to an area now known as the Abutia hills. However, they did not settle on the hills, but rather built their settlements at the foot of the hills, somewhere south of their present day location. A slave-raid from the Akwamus compelled them to move one more time but northward, where they founded the two villages of Teti on the one hand, and Agorve-Kloe on the other.

Agorve and Kloe originally formed a twin village, which was located on the present site of Agorve. However, quarrels broke out between the women of the two villages over the use of scarce water resources, and the Kloe people moved and settled about one and a half kilometres away from Agorve. At this point the three villages did not move anymore, but remained relatively close to each other in their present location, where they have remained since their last migration. It is estimated that this last migration must have occurred some time before 1865 (Verdon, 1983:111).

## 6.6 Agricultural Activities in Abutia

The main economic activity in the Abutia villages, as is the case with most rural areas of Ghana, is agriculture. This activity employs 94% of the total labour force in the district (HDA, 2006). The main crops produced in the area include corn, cassava, yams, plantains, banana, citrus, rice, mangoes and avocado pear. The non-traditional crops like pineapple are also dominant at Abutia, Sokode and Akrofu. The Adutia and Adaklu people are also noted in the district for honey production, which is evidenced by the well known Bee-Keepers Association in Abutia. Sugar cane is also grown at Tsawoenu and Ziope (Konadu-Agyeman, 2001). A few people are also engaged in the government satellite offices, which employ people for administrative and construction work.

The major systems of farming in Abutia are to a large extent defined by the agro-ecological zones. They include rotational bush fallow systems, permanent tree crop system (such as cocoa-based system); compound farming system; mixed farming system (such as maize-yam based system) and special horticultural farming. The rotational bush fallow system is the dominant farming system throughout Ghana. It is characterized by clearing and burning of the vegetative cover. The fire destroys the stems but leaves the roots unscorched, and ready to be uprooted relatively easily. Baked by the flames, the dry February soil is difficult to till, and only the deep incisions of a hoe can pierce the surface and sever the roots. In the treeless savannah, hoeing is laborious, but it is a task which falls on the shoulders of women and children (Verdon, 1983:146).<sup>149</sup>

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<sup>149</sup> It is the back that bears the brunt of it, not the biceps.

The environment, the type of techniques it imposes on cultivation, as well as the pattern of crop distribution limits the types and amount of crops that farmers are able to produce. The Abutia people start sowing in March, and plant mostly cassava and yams. Cassava can be planted during both farming seasons. The planting of yams on the other hand, is restricted to the major season. Yam and cassava farms rarely exceed one and a half acres, and the biggest yam farmers cultivate up to three hundred tubers. Men farm yams, cocoa, corn and very little cassava, while women cultivate mostly cassava, corn and vegetables such as onions, tomatoes, beans, pepper, okras and garden eggs. In this production, however, both sexes have their own farms in addition to family farms, and individuals mostly work alone.<sup>150</sup> Household members living on the same compound decide individually which crops to cultivate, and which piece of land to clear. All adults work for themselves and personally own the products of their labour. Crops are not accumulated in common granaries for the entire household. Rather, each family unit within a household has its own storage facility for the farm products (Verdon, 1983:148).

The settlement pattern in Abutia also intensifies the division between the sexes in matters of production. For instance, in addition to farming, women are expected to perform most of the domestic chores. They fetch water, sweep the house and prepare breakfast before setting off for their farms, and they have to return home early to cook the evening meal. These additional tasks would considerably shorten their farming hours in cases where

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<sup>150</sup>Some phases in the production, especially clearing, or tree-felling, may demand some degree of co-operation, although on a temporary and extremely limited scale. In exceptional cases, young men and women may help a grandmother and an old couple may sometimes be seen working jointly. In a few instances, a mother and daughter may also farm the same plot. In the majority of cases, however, husband and wife, parents and children as well as individuals of alternate generations have their separate farms and till the land individually.

they have to walk many miles to farm. For both sexes, agricultural production absorbs most of the productive time, taking up four to five days of every week (Verdon, 1983:148). However, it is obvious from the discussions that women have to cope with a considerably heavier load of daily on-farm and off-farm activities, relative to men.

### 6.7.1 Livestock and Hunting

The Abutia people do not keep any cattle, and only a few sheep, goats and poultry. Sheep and goats are not tethered, but left entirely free to roam. They feed partly on the leaves of trees (banana and plantain) growing in the vicinity of the village, and partly on kitchen scraps (cassava skin, corn cobs etc), but they seldom venture into farm areas, which are not fenced. The owners of the animals build small huts attached to their own house for them to shelter during the night. The settlement pattern of the village somehow deters the keeping of a large number of domestic animals.

Various species of mongoose thrive on the Abutia hunting grounds. There are bush cows, bongos, all species of Duikers as bucks, antelopes, kobs as well as smaller animals. Hunting used to be a very prestigious male activity in Abutia, but the situation has changed over the years. The tradition of hunting is all the more respected since the Abutia people believe that their forefathers were exclusively employed in hunting (Verdon, 1983:149). However, the slaughter of game over the last two centuries has decreased in importance, and the creation of a game reserve in Abutia by the government

has also curtailed this tradition (ibid).<sup>151</sup> The method of hunting today is different from what it used to be decades ago. After the savannah has been set afire, most farmers try to kill some of the cane rats and other small mammals which try to escape, but this does not count as real hunting and carries no prestige. The real hunters cross the farmlands to the large forest area which separates Abutia from Adaklu to look for game. The bravest and most respected warriors hunt alone, confident in the power of their medicines, as their mythical ancestors used to do. However, the majority only join in the communal hunts.

## 6.7 Political Organization

Traditional authority is an essential component of the political organisation in Ghana. The highest level of traditional authority in the district, and the entire country for that matter are the paramount chiefs. The chiefs are chosen according to the traditional rules and culture of each area. In Abutia, the traditional and social organization is based on lineage and kinship.<sup>152</sup> Each village has a chief while the three villages also share a paramount chief. The name of the chief of Teti is Togbe Keh V. The queen mother in the three villages also resides in Teti. The name of the chief of Agorve is Togbe Dra IV,

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<sup>151</sup> This information was confirmed by Togbe Ayikpe IV, chief of Kloe, who was one of the respondents in the survey.

<sup>152</sup> A lineage comprises clans and extended families that trace their genealogy to the same ancestor. The heads of various clans are chosen by the elders of the clan. The extended families also have heads who are most often the oldest male. Though the degree of autonomy varies from place to place, the clan is generally an important unit where the distribution of land and much of the informal social organizations are based. Ownership of property is passed on by patrilineal inheritance in 11 of the 12 districts in the Volta region. However, some lineages in Kadjebi and a few in the Jasikan districts are of the Akan lineage, and practice matrilineal inheritance (Kuenyehia, 1992).

who is a migrant resident in Accra. In the absence of the chief, the affairs of the village are overseen by the Regent, who has the delegated authority of the chief.

The village of Kloe is ruled by a hierarchy of chiefs, starting with the chief, Togbe Kwame Ayikpe IV and the queen mother Mama Ayikpe Ma II. Next in hierarchy to the chief is the Mankralo, followed by seven clan or divisional chiefs of the village. At the time of the research, there was a misunderstanding between the Darkey family who are the stool fathers and kingmakers, and the Ayikpe family who are the chiefs. The paramount chief of the 42 communities is Torgbe Abutia Kojo XIV of Teti. He is a young man of 28 years who succeeded his father.

Chiefs play a predominant role, particularly in rural development. Basically, the traditional authorities administer stool lands, holding them in trust for the people, and arrange the celebration of traditional festivals (Dzobo, 1975). The traditional authorities also have courts which adjudicate on matters relating to stool lands, lineage and family lands, chieftaincy title disputes, violations of traditions and disputes between localities, lineages, families and individuals (Nukunya, 1972). They are also the custodians of traditional beliefs and values, which are passed on from one generation to another. Chiefs, like magistrates, have the power in the traditional setting to deal with a variety of litigations which require arbitration (Kumekpor, 1991). However, more serious and complicated cases such as murder are usually handed over to the police. For the efficient administration of chieftaincy affairs the government has established the regional and national house of chiefs to coordinate chieftaincy administration.

## 6.9 Rural Infrastructure in Abutia

Rural infrastructure can be seen as the complex physical structures or networks within which social and economic activities are carried out. These structures are not ends in themselves, but are means to achieving the broader goals of poverty reduction and economic growth (Abate, 1999). Rural infrastructure contributes to these goals by providing essential services such as water and sanitation; energy for cooking; heat and light; employment generating commercial activities; transportation of goods and people; and the transmission and communication of knowledge and information. The general poor quality, inadequate and unreliable infrastructure services are a fact of life for the majority of rural communities in Africa (Ewusi, 1987). Many rural households do not have access to safe drinking water, electricity, good transportation, or modern communication services.

### 6.9.1 Water Supply

The Ho district is actually noted for its acute water problems. Only 3% of all rural households in the Ho district get their drinking water from standing taps, while 42% of households get their drinking water from natural sources (GSS, 2002a). Most of these sources of water are rather far away from the villages. The main source of natural water used by all three Abutia villages is a small river known as Tra, which is supplemented by streams such as Holeve, Ahorbu and Tagatse. Sometimes the villagers also get water from the stream Nyowli that flows from the surrounding hill. However, these sources of



water only flow intermittently, leaving members of the three villages without dependable water supply for a greater part of the year.

Community members have to walk long distances to fetch water and this has negative consequences for women and children, whose responsibility it is to fetch water. Children and women have to wake up as early as 5.00am to look for water. The subsequent effect is that girls go to school sleep-deprived and tired. The situation is worse in some of the settler villages who are even further away from the natural sources of water. The settlers have attempted to solve the water problem by digging small man-made ponds that collect water during the rainy season. The danger of these water holes is that they are used by both the villagers and animals, thereby serving as a source of many water-borne diseases.

The situation in the village is getting worse. The rains do not come as they used to. There is no drinking water, and we do not even have good roads.<sup>153</sup>



Plate 6.3: One natural source of water supply for Abutia Teti and Agorve

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<sup>153</sup> A comment made by a participant during FGDs at Abutia Teti on February 2006.

The Ghana Water Company Limited (GWCL) has made numerous attempts to solve the water problem in the Abutia villages.<sup>154</sup> Being the major provider of water has burdened the government in terms of funding, maintenance and monitoring of the projects. DANIDA has supplemented the government's efforts through the provision of financial and technical advice, as well as hand pumps.<sup>155</sup> It also helped dig boreholes in the villages. However, maintenance of the boreholes is the responsibility of the villagers, who are unable to keep up with the expense of the repairs, thereby leaving most of them in disrepair. Abutia Teti, for example, has three boreholes, but only one was working at the time of our research. This single borehole served the needs of all the people in the village. Needless to say it was inadequate for the villagers. Agorve also has only one borehole which serves as the main source of water supply for the villagers. At Kloe, there are two boreholes located on the outskirts of the village. Due to the gravity of the water problem, research participants emphasized water as the most important infrastructure needed in the villages.

### 6.9.2 Sanitation

Sanitation is a major problem in Ghana, in both urban and rural areas. It is estimated that 66% of rural households are without sanitation facilities (GSS, 2000a). Pertaining to refuse disposal in urban areas, a new system is in place whereby refuse is collected two times a week for a fee. In the rural areas, however, households dispose of their refuse at a common location, and this is burned periodically. Toilet facilities are particularly

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<sup>154</sup> The GWCL is the sole government agency responsible for providing potable water in the district.

<sup>155</sup> DANIDA is the Danish International Development Agency

inadequate in both urban and rural areas (GSS, 2000b). Most towns and villages have public toilets, but these are inadequate to serve the needs of the population. As a result most households in rural areas tend to construct small latrines that are usually some distance away from the family compound. Some of these toilets are enclosed in a mud hut, but the majority of them are simply fenced with woven palm branches. This is the facility that is used predominantly by households in the Abutia villages. Additionally, both Kloe and Teti have KVIPs,<sup>156</sup> which were built through community development efforts of the villagers, with financial support from migrants. These facilities serve the sanitation needs of the individual villages. Since there is no KVIP in Agorve, their sanitation problem is worse than the situation in the other two villages.

### 6.9.3 Health Facilities

Many rural areas in the district lack adequate health facilities and health personnel such as doctors, nurses, and pharmacists. Only about 39% of rural areas in the Volta region have access to health services as compared with a national average of 60% (GSS, 2002b). This gives an indication of the magnitude of poor health services in the district. In contrast to modern health care, over 80% of rural households live in communities where there is a traditional healer (Awumbila, 2001). Most people consult traditional healers

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<sup>156</sup> Kumasi Ventilated Improved Pit-Latrines

first because they cannot afford the cost of medical care, which operates as a “cash and carry” system (Survey Data, 2006).<sup>157</sup>

Health care delivery in the Ho district can be described as relatively decent when compared with other districts in the northern part of the country. However, most of the health facilities are located in towns, making accessibility rather difficult for the rural population, especially those in remote areas. For example, there are five major hospitals in Ho, the district capital. These include the district hospital, the military hospital, the Leprosy hospital and polyclinic, as well as the Volta Regional hospital, which is the final referral facility in the region (HDA, 2006). The regional hospital is only mandated to provide service through referral from other hospitals in the entire region. Thus even though five hospitals in a town may seem more than adequate, three of them are specialized hospitals, with only two serving the population of 112, 347 (WHO, 2004).

In Abutia, there is a clinic and a health post, which serve the medical needs of people from the three villages and the surrounding areas. The clinic, which is the main health center in the area, is located at Kloe.<sup>158</sup> The residents of Teti and Agorve share the services of the health post, which is located at Agorve.<sup>159</sup> There is only a limited number of staff in the two facilities. The clinic is staffed by 4 nurses, 2 ward assistants, 2 labourers, one resident midwife and a resident medical assistant. The clinic also has an

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<sup>157</sup>The cash and carry system is the consequence of the removal of subsidies on health and the introduction of user fees under SAPs. See Brydon and Legge (1996). There are no figures on health disaggregated data by gender.

<sup>158</sup> This facility used to be a health post, which has been upgraded to the status of an upgraded to a clinic. Despite the upgrade, the facilities remain inadequate and do not meet the health needs of the rural population. Most people travel to Ho the district capital to receive medical care. However, the lack of local transportation means that some villagers die from preventable diseases.

<sup>159</sup> Teti, which is the second largest village, has no health post.

overnight facility for 4 people. The health post on the other hand, has 2 nurses, 4 birth attendants and 2 labourers (Survey Data, 2006). A qualified medical officer visits the clinic on a monthly basis to see patients.

A limited amount of basic medicines are available at the facility in Kloe. However, they are available only to the nurses who in turn sell them to the people and since the villagers are poor, some cannot afford to purchase the medicines. In situations where the villagers require prescription medications, more often than not, they are compelled to travel to Ho, the district capital, to buy them. Added to this problem is the lack of a transport owner in the villages. This situation makes it almost impossible to get transportation during a health emergency, thereby resulting in the death of villagers from preventable diseases.

The lack of access to health facilities has serious implications for women because access to health services depends not only on availability of health care, but most importantly, on the cost and the ability to pay for such services.<sup>160</sup> It is evident from our discussions that rural women are most affected by household financial constraints, which prevent them from accessing health facilities (Nabila, 1986; GSS, 1999). Due to the high cost involved in consulting health personnel, most villagers, especially women, do not consult health personnel when ill or injured. A greater percentage of women rely on traditional medicine and birth attendants (TBAs) who until recently, operated under very unhygienic and dangerous conditions (WHO, 2004). They also tend to be exposed to cultural

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<sup>160</sup> Statistics show that about 50% of women living in rural areas fail to meet basic standards of physical well-being (GSS, 2000).

practices such as female genital mutilation, which places them in specific danger pertaining to their health.

The Ministry of Health has made some efforts to improve the health situation in the district through the primary health care programme (PHC). This is laudable, but there is poor logistical support. This situation is reflected in the lack of financial commitment towards general promotion and development of the health sector at the national level. Although popularly acclaimed as a very important sector, the Ministry of Health receives less than 10 percent of the overall government expenditure (GSS, 2002c). The root of the problem appears to be a lack of strong health advocates at the national budget planning stage. Since women and children compose the majority of the population in the rural areas, it goes without saying that women are affected most by the lack of health infrastructure in rural areas. As women have particular health needs, examining the proportion of the health budget spent on female-related diseases and other health issues will provide an early indicator as to whether women have been adequately included in health services.

#### 6.9.4 Educational Amenities

There are currently five levels in Ghana's entire educational system. These are Pre-school, Primary School, Junior Secondary School (JSS), Senior Secondary School (SSS), and Tertiary level. The Primary and JSS levels are jointly classified as the basic education level. The Nkrumah government's Educational Act of 1961 established

Ghana's Educational system. The system was considered one of the best in Africa and other developing countries. However in 1986, the first major restructuring of the country's educational system was initiated as part of the PNDC's economic reform programme. During the educational reform the old school system that was modeled after the British system was replaced by a JSS and SSS, which was added unto the six years of primary schooling. The JSS and SSS are of three years duration each. This is followed by four years of tertiary education. These reforms, however, have not led to any marked improvement in education.<sup>161</sup>

In Ghana, pre-school education is available mainly in urban localities, and as a result, rural children are typically excluded from it. There is a higher percentage of enrolment at primary school level in rural areas. This could be attributed to the fact that education at that basic level is free and therefore affordable. There is a sharp drop of the school population from primary (59.0%) to JSS (23.2%) at the regional level and higher in most districts (GSS, 2000a). This may be due to a number of factors, such as the fact that there are fewer new educational infrastructures such schools for JSS in the districts.

Rural households in general have more access to primary schools than to JSS, which in turn are more accessible than SSS or Technical schools (GSS, 2000b). The situation is not different from the research area where the educational facilities are rather inadequate. Teti has one kindergarten and one primary and JSS which were built by the EP church. The dormitories of the secondary technical school are also located in Teti. Agorve has

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<sup>161</sup> See Panford 2001:228-231 for some of the negative effects of the educational reforms.

one kindergarten, one primary and J.S.S that were also built by the Presbyterian (EP) church. The village is also the location for the secondary technical school. Kloe has one kindergarten and one J.S.S. which was built by the Evangelical Presbyterians. There used to be a Technical School, but it was registered in the name of the 31<sup>st</sup> December Women's Movement. Therefore, it was closed by the new government when they came into power. The building has been converted into workshops for the JSS. The research found that the class sizes for the primary schools are large. Meanwhile there are no desks and chairs for the children. Some children have to bring chairs each day to school.

Declining school enrolment and attendance by gender at both primary and secondary levels is a trend that characterizes education in most rural areas. Almost an equal number of boys and girls in Abutia attend primary school, but fewer girls receive secondary or higher education. Dropout starts after primary school, leading to the large difference between JSS and SSS enrolment. The situation can be attributed to a variety of factors. For students in the JSS some of the factors include examination failure, lack of funds on the part of the parents to pay for SSS education, or some enrolling in Vocational, Technical or Commercial Schools. For those in SSS, the drop could be a result of truancy arising partly from adolescence. As discussed earlier in the thesis, girls are more likely to be taken out of school than boys.

The principal reason for fewer girls in secondary education is because girls are often needed at home to help with chores and care for younger siblings, and also to marry at an early age (Mikell, 1997). As a result of poverty and lack of farm labour due to



migration, parents also tend to remove their children from school to assist with farming (Ardayfio-Schandorf, 1994). For instance, when children are in school during peak labour season, the women are left with increased labour burden. Hence, poor rural households may have to take children out of school in order to have enough labour on the farm and at home. The implications of children being taken out of school are far-reaching by affecting their livelihood in future.

The importance of girls' education to the development agenda has now received widespread recognition. However, there are many rural contexts where the labour of girls is vital to household survival and this requires that educational provision be made in a different form to that provided in developed countries. Schools which operate outside of working hours, or school sessions which are harvest sensitive need consideration under rural infrastructure services. Ensuring that village school buildings are flexibly utilized to the benefit of whole communities and most particularly women is crucial.

Since urban jobs typically require higher levels of education, most school leavers and educated members of the rural labour force migrate to urban centers. Writing in the 1960s, Omaboe (1966 cited in Adepoju, 2000) drew attention to this phenomenon.

He noted “In Ghana.....there is a growing drift of labour from the rural areas to the urban centers. Unfortunately, the drift has been largely of the educated sections of the rural population. These have not found agricultural employment attractive either economically or socially and they have swarmed to the few urban centers to seek employment in white collar jobs” (Omaboe 1966 cited in Adepoju, 2000).

Although Omaboe's observation was relevant at the time, it still applies to migration today. An added facet is that these days migration is not only undertaken by the educated, but also by the uneducated who look for opportunities in the informal sector.

### 6.9.5 Transportation

There is a lack of adequate road networks in the district, particularly roads within rural areas such as farm to market areas, as well as between rural and semi-urban areas. The road network is particularly underdeveloped in the Abutia communities, leaving them isolated from other villages and towns.<sup>162</sup> With the exception of the major first class road that links Ho with Accra and other major towns like Hohoe and Kpandu, the road network in the region is in a very bad state. Most of the roads are graveled, but certain parts of the district do not have roads at all, while other areas that have passable roads become unmotorable and impassable during the rainy season.

A journey that might take 45 minutes in other parts of the country would have to be made in 2-3 hours in some parts of the Volta region. Areas that are totally inaccessible by road are known as "overseas communities" by travelers, in recognition of the extreme difficulties faced in reaching them (Ewusi, 1986). The only alternative available is the use of boats to cross the rivers in these areas. As a result of the road conditions, state transport services only ply between accessible towns. Although privately owned

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<sup>162</sup>The two organizations charged with the responsibility for constructing and maintaining roads in Ghana are the Ghana Highway Authority (for the construction and maintenance of trunk roads) and the Department of Feeder Roads (for the construction and maintenance of feeder roads). The road network in the Ho District could be classified into three main categories, namely paved or tarred roads, unpaved or gravelled roads and feeder roads.

transports are willing to travel these roads, the fares are exorbitant, and this affects the frequency of travel in some areas.

There is a third class untarred road that connects the research communities to the surrounding villages. The distance between the research communities and the nearest major road that links Ho to Accra is about 7 miles. The poor condition of roads in the research communities has profound consequences for the villagers. For example, getting transportation during the rainy season becomes difficult. Additionally, this situation hampers the ability of small subsistence farmers to sell their produce.

Poor transport in the Abutia villages also intensifies the burden of women (Snyder & Tadesse, 1995). This is particularly the case where women are compelled to walk with head loads of fuel wood, water, agricultural produce and household goods in the absence of other forms of transportation. Developing rural transport infrastructure will especially benefit women because they have the biggest transport burden in Africa (Reardon, 2001). The link between good road network and migration from sending communities is that it enables migrants to visit their households more regularly. The generally bad condition of the roads had compelled some communities such as the Abutia villages to assume road rehabilitation in addition to other rural development commitments.

### 6.9.6 Energy Supply

Fuel wood is the primary source of energy for rural households in Ghana. At least 98% of households in the Abutia villages use wood and charcoal as fuel for cooking (Nabila, 1986). Consequently, there is a high demand for fuel wood for domestic purposes. The widespread use of fuel wood is mainly influenced by the inadequacy, expense, and socio-economic status of rural households (Ardayfio-Schandorf, 1994). Our research showed that most people in the villages are poor and, therefore, cannot afford the high cost of other fuel types such as kerosene stoves and electrical accessories.

As a result of the government's commitment to the rural electrification programme, some rural households have access to electricity. However, the use of electricity is limited by their inability to pay relatively high electricity bills. The kerosene lamp, therefore, is the main source of lighting in many households, with almost eight out of ten households using kerosene lamps in the Abutia communities (Survey Data, 2006). In the evening, children who go to school must read and do their homework by dim lighting provided kerosene lamps. Even though a health clinic exists in the villages, the lack of electricity and outages prevent the clinic from stocking refrigerated medicines. The potential for agricultural processing, small business development and rural employment is also constrained by the lack of electricity.

We noticed some differentials in men and women's experience with energy resources during our stay in Abutia. As pivots of household management in charge of family

welfare, fuel wood collection is a central task for Abutia women (Ardayfio-Schandorf, 1993). We observed that starting in the pre-dawn hours, women walk long distances to fetch water, which may be neither safe nor adequate for their needs (Survey Data, 2006). They cook with inefficient technologies, such as wood and charcoal stoves, utilizing wood that is cut farther and farther from the village.<sup>163</sup> Women sometimes spend between three to four hours collecting firewood, and travel more than a kilometer to take it home. This lengthens their work day, because they also perform all their household chores and spend time on their livelihood. This finding is confirmed in a study conducted by Ardayfio-Schandorf (1993) in southern Ghana, in which the author found that some women spend between five to eight hours a day fetching fuel wood.

#### 6.9.7 Telecommunication Services

Historically, telecommunication services have been dominated by the urban areas, with rural extensions consisting primarily of pay phones and public call centres. The Volta Region is not very well endowed with telecommunication facilities. Ghana Telecom's fixed landline telephone system serves the region. However, tele-density for the region of 0.1 per 100 persons is the lowest in the country, a position it shares with Brong Ahafo, Northern and Upper East regions. The national average is 0.7, compared with 3.2 per 100 persons for Greater Accra (GSS, 2002c).

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<sup>163</sup> Fetching firewood is considered a female-related activity and therefore mainly undertaken by women.

There is no facility for landline telephones in any of the Abutia villages. The Mobile or cell phone telecommunication facility is available in the region, but this service is not available in all areas. Reception for the mobile phone is only available at specific locations in the Abutia villages. In Kloe, for instance, reception is only available under a big tree in the open area used for meetings. A few migrant households have access to mobile phones but cannot afford the cost of calls so they tend to “flash,” that is call and hang up after the first ring and have the recipient call back.



PLATE 6.4: The principal researcher, after a FGDs in Abutia Kloe. The area by the large tree behind me is the only place in the village where one can get mobile phone signal.

### 6.9.8 Markets

As agricultural villages, the accessibility to market for the purchase and sale of farm and related products is essential for households. The GLSS (2002a) stipulates that for all rural areas in the country, about 41% live in areas where they have to travel between 1-9 miles to the nearest market. A further 13% have to travel a distance between 10-19 miles to get to market whilst 5% have to travel 20 miles or more (ibid). The lack of markets, however, remains a major problem confronting rural areas in the district. There is no market facility in any of the Abutia villages since the main market in Teti was closed many years ago. The nearest accessible market is the Ho market, but there has always been the challenge of finding transportation from Abutia to Sokode Gbogame, and from there to the Ho market.

Due to inadequate infrastructure and high transport costs, about 95% of farm produce is head loaded at the village level mainly by women and children.<sup>164</sup> Some women have to walk to Sokode Gbogame to get a vehicle to the market in Ho. This subsequently results in some farmers arriving there late and unable to sell all their products at good prices. In an attempt to solve the problem, the Ho District Assembly built a new market at Kissiflui, one of the settlement villages (HDA, 2006). However, this was done without consultation with the Abutia people, and therefore, did not take into consideration the deplorable state of the road networks, from Abutia Kloe to Kissiflui, particularly during the rainy season.

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<sup>164</sup> Survey Data (2006).

As a result of this oversight, although this market is relatively closer, it is inaccessible to the Abutia villages because drivers are reluctant to travel the road. The lack of accessible road to the market imposes difficulty on the villagers and contributes significantly to post harvest losses. These losses in turn weaken a farmer's ability to purchase inputs such as seeds, fertilizers, and hired labour. Such a situation invariably leads to poverty and some farmers are forced to abandon farming and migrate (Ardayfio-Schandorf, 1994). Inadequate rural infrastructure therefore, is a major barrier to rural poverty reduction because it impedes market integration, even within the rural economy, limiting opportunities for trade and income generation.

#### **6.10 Other Infrastructures**

At the time of the field work, there was only one postal structure in Abutia Teti being operated by a retired community member. Its services are limited to only the village of Teti, leaving the other two villages without postal services. The villagers indicated that there used to be a post office at Kloe that served the three villages, but the villagers had to pay 50% of the postman's salary whilst the government paid for the other 50%. However, when the postman went on retirement, the government refused to pay half the salary for a replacement. And since the villagers could not pay a full salary either, that ended the postal services to the villages. Kloe is the only village in Abutia that has a police station. The station serves all the indigenous Abutia villages as well as the settlement villages. It has two policemen on duty and two others on attachment.



There is a small education office with a staff of two people who oversee educational affairs under the Ministry of Education. There used to be a 31<sup>st</sup> December Women's Gari Processing Factory in Teti and day care in Kloe, but these facilities were closed down during the change of government.<sup>165</sup> The Kalakpa game and wildlife reserve which is located in Kloe employs an extensive staff of about 30 people. The main purpose of these employees is to guard the reserve from poachers. They however, complained of low wages which sometimes remain unpaid for months.

## **6.11 Infrastructure and Gender Relations**

The lack of adequate, affordable and reliable infrastructure services touches the life of a rural Ghanaian family every day. However, it is clear that there are differentials in men and women's experience of rural life. Starting in the pre-dawn hours, many women must walk long distances to the nearest water supply, which may be neither safe nor adequate for their needs. They cook with inefficient technologies, utilizing wood that is cut farther and farther from the village. At the same time, they are subjected to fumes that can damage their lungs and eyes. Household efforts to rise above subsistence are limited by poor access to markets, supplies and vital information.

Local roads are impassable, and there is no telephone or other communication facilities for many miles. The potential for agricultural processing, small business development and rural employment is constrained by the lack of electricity (Moser, 1993). Even if a

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<sup>165</sup>The 31<sup>st</sup> December Women's Movement is a non-governmental organisation set up by the then First Lady of Ghana, Mrs. Nana Konadu Agyeman Rawlings. She is also the President of the Movement. Setting up Gari factories and Day Care centres were major programme activities of the organisation.

health clinic exists, the lack of electricity prevents the clinic from stocking refrigerated medicines. In the evening, children who go to school must read and do their homework by dim lighting provided through expensive and often polluting sources. While the above description is anecdotal, variations of this scene are familiar to all who have seen or lived in rural Ghana, and it is women who are mostly affected in each situation.

## **6.11 Conclusion**

This chapter has provided information on existing social conditions in both the Volta region and the Ho district, with a focus on the Abutia villages. The discussion has shown that there is a general lack of infrastructure in the Volta region. The inadequate infrastructure and poverty situation in the region is mirrored in the district, and inevitably, the research communities. The chapter has also provided an insight into the gendered differentials in men and women's experiences with rural infrastructure, power relations in households, and gender inequities in the society regarding access to resources, and societal roles of women and men.

The chapter advocates for improved rural infrastructure. This will require a collaborative effort by government, private sector and development agencies to invest in rural amenities such as water, health, education, transportation, markets, sanitation, and fuel, among others. Such initiative is important as part of development efforts to improve the livelihood of rural households, to create new opportunities in terms of higher incomes and better living standards. The resultant economic development will also reduce gender

disparities in the country, and hopefully, reduce the burden of Ghanaian women (Brydon & Legge, 1993; Hutchful, 1997). It is obvious that while economic growth generally improves gender equality, the impact is not automatic, immediate or sufficient. That is why active government policies are critical in promoting gender equality in rights, in access and control of land, credit and in economic participation and political voice. In order to be effective, the implementation of these policies must be grounded in an understanding of how policy affects women and men differently.

## **CHAPTER 7**

### **CHARACTERISTICS OF HOUSEHOLDS AND RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS**

#### **7.1 Introduction**

The chapter presents the demographic characteristics of households and respondents who participated in our research, in terms of age, sex, and household composition. It further discusses the dynamics within households, such as power relations and gender socialization, division of labour, access to resources, economic activities, as well as other relevant socio-cultural and economic data pertinent to the study. This information is crucial for the interpretation of key demographic indicators for migration, gender and livelihood in Abutia, and forms the basis of the background information by which most key demographic indices are analyzed throughout this dissertation.

During the study, each household head or spouse was asked to answer for the migration of household members since the migrants were at their destinations, thereby acting as a proxy respondent in some situations. It is generally known that the quality of data obtained from a proxy respondent, that is a household head or spouse in our case, is usually lower than data collected directly from the migrant (Agesa & Agesa, 1999:145). Therefore, in order to ensure comprehensive, consistent and reliable data, some household heads and participants were interviewed two times. Additionally, in order to

verify and complement the information provided by heads of households, and to ensure that our data is valid and reliable, we also interviewed 25 migrants aged between 19 and 45, who are members of the Abutia association resident in Accra.

## 7.2 The Household

Brydon and Chant (1989:47) define the household as:

The household, whether defined as a unit of residence or domestic consumption is a crucial feature of social organization whatever form it takes. A further reason for the central role of the household is its multiplicity of function: it is the site of biological and social reproduction, of socialization, of nurturing and of fundamental decision-making.

One of the defining characteristics of rural agricultural households is the strength of family ties.<sup>166</sup> Kinship or family system in Abutia refers to the customary and normative manner in which family processes unfold; that is, the usual preferred pattern of family practices and household dynamics (Verdon, 1983:121). The key elements usually included in the family system are residential arrangements, succession, property inheritance, types of marriage, and power structures within the family. There are many variations within the kinship system which serve as crucial factors for the organization of the social relationships of production and reproduction (Brydon & Chant 1989; Ardayfio-Schandorf, 1994).

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<sup>166</sup>About 70% of Ghanaians live in rural areas, principally as subsistence farmers and the majority lack access to basic social services (GSS, 2002a). See Brydon and Chant (1989) whose definition I use in this chapt.

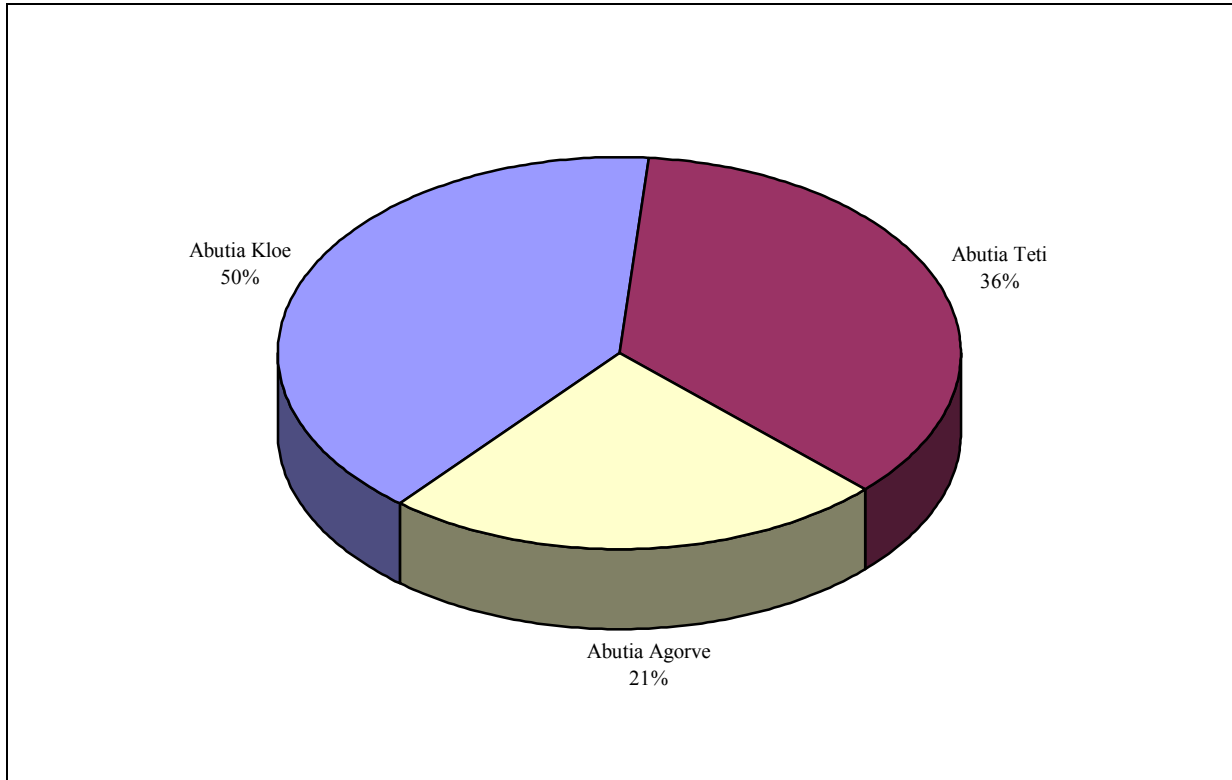
Generally in a rural setting in Ghana, a number of family units may be found residing within the same residential compound, thereby constituting one household. In peri-urban communities, however, people living in the same compound do not necessarily constitute one household, and tend to regard themselves as separate entities. This is because usually they are not related, but simply renting rooms from the same landlord. We found that in a rural setting like Abutia, people living on the same compound are usually related by blood or marriage.<sup>167</sup> These households may share either sleeping room or have a single room to a family, but share the kitchen, veranda and courtyards. They consider themselves as an integral part of each other and, therefore, constitute a household. In a few cases, rooms in houses are rented to distant relatives and workers such as teachers and nurses. For the purposes of this study, a household consists of several family units who may be related and residing on the same compound and sharing the same kitchen.

A total of 107 households were drawn from the three villages to participate in the research. There were 50 households drawn from Abutia Kloe, 36 were from Teti and 21 households from Agorve, which is the smallest of the three villages. The findings show that 66 of the total households who were included in the survey were headed by women, and 41 were headed by men.

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<sup>167</sup>This is because of the villagers are related either by marriage or blood, either closely or distantly. There are relatively few “outsiders” living in Abutia. These are mainly nurses, teachers and church leaders. Most of the rooms rented are “hall and chamber”, which consists of a small living room at the front and a bedroom at the back.

**Figure 7.1: Percentage of Respondents from each Research Community**



Source: Survey Data (2006)

### 7.2.1 Male-Headed Households

In most regions in Ghana, the traditional household structure is based on male-headed units of the extended family system, related predominantly by matrilineal kinship. This system has been strictly maintained throughout history, particularly in the Volta region (Nukunya, 1972).<sup>168</sup> The extended family structures dominate in Abutia, mainly because they are compatible with labour demands of agricultural production. Some of the families have separate residences, but more often than not they are all located within the same compound, and one key feature is that they share the same kitchen (Amenumey,

<sup>168</sup> Some parts of Northern Volta region practice matrilineal heritage.

1986:95). Some nuclear families tend to live in houses built by the head of household, while extended families tend to live in houses that are either inherited or owned (Verdon, 1983:102). Nuclear families may consist of young married couples or a wife living in a house built by her migrant husband. The family, involving both nuclear and extended family members, ultimately provides the primary source of economic, emotional and social security.

As indicated earlier, households usually consist of the head who can be either male or female, and the group's secondary members who may comprise of the head's father, mother, adult siblings, adult children and spouse.<sup>169</sup> Male-headed households also result in part from the inheritance practice whereby houses and other properties are inherited by rights mainly by the first son. The male head lives with his wife and children, and either elderly parents or unmarried siblings in the same household (Chant, 1998:76). The fact that children and relatives other than the immediate family constitute a significant proportion of the household supports the view that the traditional household structure is still very much a part of the social structure of the research area. We observed that the majority of male own their houses.

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<sup>169</sup> In Abutia the head of household is usually the elderly male adult, who is referred to as the "afe tator." The head of household has the responsibility of making all the major decisions that affect members of his household. He can be assisted by the most elderly woman in the household, but his authority tends to be delegated to the first born male due to the patriarchal lineage of the Ewes. The predominance of male-headed household is however changing with the increase in female-headed households.



## 7.2.2 Female-Headed Households

There are predominantly *de facto*<sup>170</sup> female-headed households in Abutia. *De jure*<sup>171</sup> female-headed households, however, were not encountered in the course of our fieldwork. The gender composition of household heads might be due partly to early migration patterns that made more women heads of households as the men traveled to the cocoa growing areas (Brydon, 1987a). This shows that increasingly, female-headed households have become an important component of migrant households in Abutia. The basic characteristic of a *de facto* female-headed household is the fact that the woman who acts as the household head in every life has no legal rights to the household and clan land because of the Ewe patriarchal system (Kuenyehia, 1998). In this kind of system it is normal for all legal rights to any clan land of a household to belong to the husband and his male children. The woman in an Abutia household, for instance, is only endowed with custodian and usufruct rights, which terminate upon her death or upon divorce or separation from the husband. However, for all intents and purposes, the woman is the manager of the household and, hence the land.

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<sup>170</sup>*De facto* female-headed households are defined as those where male spouses have out-migrated out of the marital homes in search of wage employment and actually stay away for more than six months in a year. During the research, if the woman in the household stated that she was the head of the household because she made all the decisions, despite the presence of the husband, such a household was also defined as being a *de facto* female-headed household. See also Brydon & Chant (1989) Chapt 4 – discussion on households

<sup>171</sup>*De jure* female-headed households are those where the women in a household has legal rights, in the form of a title deed, to the land independent of the spouse. Such female-headed households are rare in the rural villages of Abutia.

### 7.3 Research Participants/Respondents

All the respondents in our study were heads of households or their spouses. All the participants were from the Volta region and spoke “*Ewe dome*” language, which is the local language of the Abutia villages.<sup>172</sup> About 100 of the respondents were born in Abutia, and the other 7 were born in other villages within the Ho district. The age of household heads who participated in the study ranged between 40 and 90yrs. Among those interviewed, 36 were within 40-49 years age bracket and 73 were above 50 years. The age of respondents is an indication that Abutia has an aging population. In addition, the age-sex pattern may suggest that more females are living longer than males, particularly at the older ages. The proportion of male and female within each age bracket is presented under the gender of respondent (Table 7.1). The majority of respondents (64) were married in monogamous relations, with only 3 practicing polygyny. Nine people were either separated or divorced, 18 were widowed; 8 were single and 7 were living together in consensual union.

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<sup>172</sup>There are about 90 ethnic groups in Ghana, but these can be classified into major language groups consisting of the Kwa linguistic group which embraces almost all of southern Ghana, and the Gur linguistic group which is found predominantly in northern Ghana. Within the Kwa group, the Akan are in the majority constituting 44% of the population. The Ewe, whose geo-ethnic centre is the Volta region, account for 13% of the total population (GOG/UNICEF, 1990)

**Table 7.1: Age and Gender of Respondents**

Age	Gender of Respondents		Total (%)
	Male	Female	
20 - 30yrs	-	100 (4)	3.8 (4)
31 - 40yrs	25.0 (3)	75.0 (9)	11.3 (12)
41 - 50yrs	7.1 (1)	92.9 (13)	13.2 (14)
51 - 60yrs	17.4 (4)	82.6 (19)	21.7 (23)
61 - 70yrs	41.4 (12)	58.6 (17)	27.4 (29)
71 - 80yrs	63.6 (14)	36.4 (8)	20.8 (22)
81 - 90yrs	1	100 (2)	1.9 (3)
Total	32.1 (35)	67.9 (72)	100 (107)

*NB: Figures in parenthesis represent frequency of respondents*

Source: Survey Data (2006)

## 7.4 Education of Respondents

Education is important for progressive development, in that it helps individuals to make informed decisions that impact their health, livelihood and general well-being (Kabeer, 1991). In general, the level of education amongst the heads of households surveyed in Abutia was found to be very low. The research findings show that a total 25 heads of households had at least some primary school education; 34 completed primary school; 26 of them had completed middle school education; and 22 respondents had no formal education.<sup>173</sup> Vocational training and technical education are more prominent in the villages. However, the greatest emphasis is on apprenticeship training. This is because most of the villagers are poor and could only enroll their wards in “work and pay”

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<sup>173</sup>Primary is the equivalent of elementary school. See chapter 4 for detailed discussions on education in Ghana.

apprenticeships.<sup>174</sup> Skills such as masonry, carpentry, dress making, hair dressing and driving were among the largest share of vocational training.

Data collected on the educational status of respondents was further disaggregated by gender. The results show that 39 of those who had no education were males and 68 were females.<sup>175</sup> The female respondents indicated that they were not educated because their parents found no value in educating girls, and rather sent their brothers to school. This is in line with the traditional Ghanaian perspective, which does not place value on female education and ascribes to the notion that the place of a woman is in the kitchen. This finding, therefore, support the socialization process, whereby boys were sent to school and girls stayed at home to assist their parents (Brydon & Chant, 1989).

Although this data pertains to household heads, we were rather surprised to find that history seemed to be repeating itself as parents, especially fathers in the study, stated that they prefer sending the boy-child rather than the girl-child to school. This attitude has once again prevented most females in the next generation from having access to formal education. For instance, we observed that girls of school going age who were not in school outnumbered boys. Some of the female heads of household further stated that they were forced into marriage at an earlier. This evidence is supported by Dolphine (1991) who asserts that the societal perception in Ghana is that a woman is expected to

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<sup>174</sup>This is an arrangement whereby the apprentice works and learns skills at the same time, but his wages are used to pay for the cost of apprenticeship.

<sup>175</sup>In many developing countries, a woman's role is still defined in terms of marriage and child rearing, and girls' education is seen as less important than boys'. Where there is little educational benefit to be gained, it is not surprising if poverty-stricken parents decide it is not worth incurring the costs of sending a girl to school.

marry soon after puberty, and that she does not need formal education to perform this marital function. The author argues:

“A woman is expected to be provided for by her husband, and since education became a means for entering highly-paid jobs in the formal sector, it was considered more important for boys to have formal education since they were to be the breadwinners in the family.”<sup>176</sup>

Although this perception is changing in Ghana, it is taking longer for it to take root in the rural areas.<sup>177</sup> The research findings further show that the proportion of women with no education is higher among older women, thereby suggesting that some improvement has occurred in education over the years. This improvement may be attributed to the impact of the Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education (fCUBE) programme, which was introduced in 1996. The implications of gender imbalance in education is important because education equips boys and men with more employable skills than women, thereby leading to more men than women being able to migrate.<sup>178</sup> According to Ansu-Kyeremeh (1997), the low educational status of Ghanaian women is an important development concern because it determines their economic status in the society. In urban areas, lack of qualification or a narrow range of skills limits the access of women to

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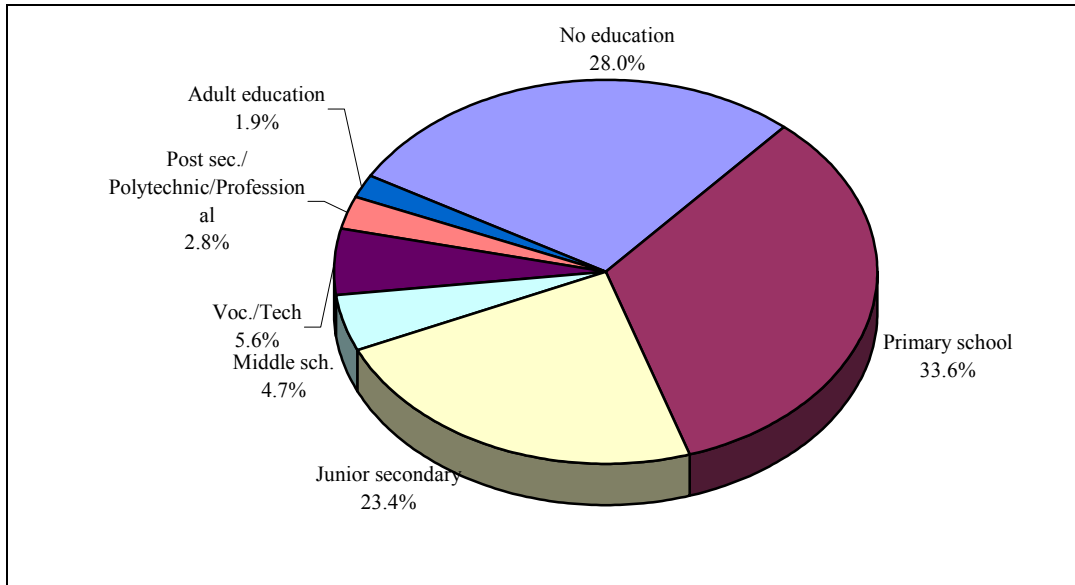
<sup>176</sup> Dolphine (1991:49)

<sup>177</sup> According to figures from the GSS (2002a), Ghana has a literacy rate of 47.9%. Males constitute 62.3%, which is higher than the female rate of 36.4%. In terms of regional variations, the Volta region has the highest literacy rate of 55.7% while in the urban areas of the country the Greater Accra region has the highest rate of 75.7%. The Northern region has the lowest literacy rates both in the rural setting (6.9%) and the urban areas (37.9%).

<sup>178</sup> These findings are supported by the GSS and MI (2003) which shows that men are more educated than women at all levels of education, implying that females continue to lag behind males in education. Similar research by Bridge estimates that three quarters of rural women are illiterates in Ghana (Bridge, 1994).

formal employment. In rural areas, lack of formal or informal education tends to limit farm productivity and access to agricultural extension services (Brydon, 1987).

**Figure 7.2: Educational Attainment of Respondents**



Source: Survey Data (2006)

## 7.5 Religion of Respondents

Religion plays a major role in the lives of Ghanaians, and constitutes a very important part of rural life in Abutia. The study findings show that people from the three villages are very religious. Christianity is the most practiced religion across the three villages. A small percentage of the population in the villages also practices African traditional religion. Among the households surveyed, 68 of respondents belong to the Evangelical Presbyterian church; 26 are Pentecostals; 6 are Catholics; 4 are Methodist; and 3 are

traditional religion practitioners. Surprisingly only the chief priest and two others admitted publicly that they practice African traditional religion. Further discussions with them revealed that there are other villagers who practice the religion and sometimes simultaneously with Christianity. However, this is not acceptable and a church member can be punished and banned and if it becomes public knowledge that he/she practices traditional religion. As a result most people tend to hide it and never admitted it publicly.

It is clear that the Evangelical Presbyterian Church, formerly the Bremen mission, is the most attended church in the three villages (Verdon, 1983:132).<sup>179</sup> The E.P. Church owes part of its success to its method of recruitment, first through the schools, and also through Bible classes and other groups which rely heavily on singing in their activities. Local forms of musical entertainment and dancing used to be uncommon since local government by-laws during the colonial era forbade traditional drumming and dancing because of its so-called “heathen” and arousing character. This lack of musical expression, which was popular in the past, is thus compensated by the singing groups of the church, thereby attracting more people. Today, the situation has changed in the Presbyterian Church as well as many other Protestant churches where singing is accompanied by drumming, clapping and dancing.

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<sup>179</sup> The Evangelical Presbyterian church is simply referred to as the E.P. Church. The church has been split into two factions.

## 7.6 Social Function Most Attended

The social function most attended by participants is religious services. About 102 people from the households surveyed indicated that they attend church every Sunday. The second function that is most attended in the villages are funerals. More than half of the households surveyed stated that they attend at least one funeral a month. Most respondents said that they feel duty-bound to attend funerals because it operates on an unspoken reciprocal system. If a person does not attend other people's funeral, when his or her relative dies, others also will not bother to attend and provide support. Baby out-dooring and chieftaincy meetings are the least attended functions. Due to the cost involved, only very few people organize out-dooring ceremonies for their babies. They simply take the child to church to be blessed by the pastor. The functions mostly attended by the different sexes do not vary significantly as the trend is almost the same for males and females.

Abutia women play a significant role in family, church and other social networks. Other social obligations included their role in organizing, attending, and participating in weddings, funeral, church functions, and women's group meetings. Women's continued devotion to the maintenance of such social and community obligations is due in part to their ongoing identification of such responsibilities as the "customary" domain of women (Moser, 1993). However, the role of women in the community must also be understood as a deliberate and strategic "investment" in social relations, as a means of establishing and maintaining potential channels of access to resources, support and social power.



Unfortunately, sometimes these social obligations cause some women to suspend their farms and other economic activities.

## **7.7 Gender Ideology and Socialization**

Gender ideology is to a great extent, part of the more general ideology in the Ghanaian social formation (Oppong, 1983).<sup>180</sup> The ideology prevalent in Abutia is reflected abundantly in the decision-making process and the division of labour within households, and they are presented both as a legitimizing process and as a social reality (Awusabo-Asare, 1990:88).<sup>181</sup> It is evident from earlier discussions on gender issues in the study that traditionally women are defined physically and intellectually as the “weaker” sex, in all ways subordinate to male authority (Mikell, 1997:145). In private life women are subject to fathers, husbands, brothers and even adult sons. Publicly, men dominate all decision-making in political, legal and economic affairs (Ameyibor, 1993).

There is a strong association between gender ideology and gender roles, and this is underpinned by socially constructed gender norms and expectations internalized by individuals (Manuh, 1984). As indicated earlier in the dissertation, gender socialization begins very early in Abutia. As soon as people put a label on the child as either a “girl” or “boy”, they begin treating the child in a stereotypical fashion (Oppong, 1987:72). This

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<sup>180</sup>The concept of ideology is being used in the Gramscian sense of the term. According to Gramsci, ideology is present as conceptions of the world and it is manifest in art, laws, social and economic activities and in all practical activities of individual and collective life.

<sup>181</sup>Gender ideology refers to attitudes and behaviors about what is appropriately feminine and masculine according to the gender stereotypes of one’s society (Barnett et al., 1993).

stereotyping follows the child throughout his or her life, and is reinforced by socialization, the process of acquiring cultural values and norms, through the major socializing agents of family, school, religion and the mass media (Gramsci, 1971). In Abutia this is achieved mainly through the influence of family, especially grandparents who tell value-laden stories and adages to children.<sup>182</sup> For example one grandpa in the village told his grandson the story of the dog and the cat:

“The difference between the dog and the cat is that the dog barks at every little thing it sees, even things that do not concern it. The cat on the other hand notices everything that happens around it but walks away quietly. The dog is therefore seen to be noisy and not liked. The cat is seen as quiet and diplomatic and liked by everybody. So try to be like the cat.”<sup>183</sup>

The interpretations that people give to events depend on their interests, knowledge, backgrounds and also cultural setting. According to Nukunya (1969) and Oppong & Abu (1987:162), our culture shapes what we see; our early childhood socialization forms how we look at the world; and our value systems tell us how to interpret the world. In order to determine the societal perspectives on gender ideology, respondents were interviewed regarding their view of the ideal woman and the ideal man. The results show that community members define the ideal woman as a hard worker who obeys her parents in her early years, and later her husband. She is described as soft spoken, nurturing, compliant and subordinate. The ideal woman is also seen as primarily responsible for domestic duties, and crucial to the integrity of the family unit. The ideal man in Abutia is

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<sup>182</sup>These are known as grandpa stories.

<sup>183</sup>Participant Observation, Abutia Teti, February, 2006.

also described as a hard worker who honors his parents and respects his wife and also provides for her and his family.

Needless to say, the ideal woman or man does not exist in the true sense of the word. It is, of course, a stereotype and does not always reflect reality. However, at the same time it provides an insight into the key perspective that underpins gender relations in Abutia, which is transmitted through a common ideology in Abutia (Ardayfio-Schandorf & Awumbila, 2000:113). The emphasis on women's subordination exists relates to the fact that the Abutia social formation acts as a power network which has its own gender regime.<sup>184</sup> The centrality of women's domestic roles in the household, however, is not found only in Ghana, but has been an important feature of many societies throughout history, and is linked crucially to women's subordination (Brown & Kerr, 1997:82).

## **7.8 Household Relations**

Marriage is a very important component of the family system in Abutia. However, most family units in Abutia have only one wife because polygyny is not widely practiced in the villages.<sup>185</sup> As a result women often have the right to live in their father's, brother's or mother's house. These facts combine to deprive them of any incentive to tolerate the presence of co-wives in their residential group (Verdon, 1983:127). Polygyny is less prevalent now in the Ghanaian society because of inroads into Christianity and also because many men cannot afford to pay more than one bride price (Amanor, 2001:135).

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<sup>184</sup>Brydon and Chant (1989)

<sup>185</sup>See section 5.5.4

The gender ideology that exists in Abutia also influences gender relations in marriage. For instance husbands and wives enter into “contracts” with specific expectations of the respective roles, rights and obligations of each spouse. Traditionally, men have the culturally defined obligation to provide for the economic subsistence of their families and to protect female members. However, the study found that in most marriages in Abutia, there is a marked division of financial responsibilities between husbands and wives, which are based on local gender ideology and social norms (Brydon & Chant, 1989). In order to determine whether these culturally assigned roles were being practiced many women were asked to express their opinions regarding the “ideal” roles and responsibilities of the genders.

About 36% of female research participants indicated that their spouses, both migrants and non-migrants, performed their household duties as was required of them. On the other hand, 49% said that they had to perform more of the financial responsibilities of men, while the rest (15%) simply chose not to respond to the question. This finding is an indication that social norms are often at odds with daily practice. This is because gender roles and responsibilities are flexible, dynamic and subject to manipulation and renegotiation within the context of marriage and household relationships. In the presence of changing economic circumstances one or both spouses may neglect, or otherwise default on specific responsibilities which subsequently leads to conflict. In sum, gender ideology influences gender roles in every aspect of productive and reproductive activities.

In Ghana, marriage has its own peculiar rules in relation to child ownership depending on the family system concerned (Nukunya, 1972). In patrilineal areas such as Abutia, children are traditionally regarded as members of the family of the man, whereas among matrilineal areas such as Ashanti and Brong Ahafo, they remain members of their mother's family (Manuh, 1984; Kuenyehia, 1998).<sup>186</sup> Children also provide the links of kinship without which wives have no enduring rights in their marital homes or husband's assets and other resources, including land. Manuh (1997) contends that without children, women's conjugal links are tenuous and fragile, and those of them in a virilocal marriage would remain an outsider (ibid).<sup>187</sup> This situation subsequently deprives women of financial security as well as social status in their old age.

Children in Abutia contribute significantly to desperately needed labour in the household. Without them many daily laborious tasks cannot be completed. They are generally noted to assist with farm work such as weeding, taking care of animals and also in gathering and processing foods and selling them in the market. Some girls carry water and fuel wood, and they also help with the cooking and assist their mothers to care for their younger siblings. Finally, these children are expected to take care of their parents.

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<sup>186</sup>Patrilineality is a system in which one inherits property, names or titles through the male lineage. See glossary for detailed explanation.

<sup>187</sup>A virilocal marriage is one in which the wife leaves her natal family and joins her husband's family to live with her parents-inlaw and extended family.

## 7.9 Household Division of Labour

Across time and cultures, a division of labor based on gender has always existed, whereby some work has been defined as men's work, some as women's work (Jackson & Pearson, 1998). In order to comprehend the power relations within the household, the study analyzed the division of labour within the "farming household."<sup>188</sup> It was obvious during the research that community members have well-defined opinions on the role of men and women regarding household chores (Afshar, 1998). The research findings show that the relationships and roles within the household are based on gender, with a traditional pattern of a clear-cut division of labour between men and women. Both male and female respondents reiterated verbally and through their actions the centrality of the domestic sphere to women and man's role as the breadwinner.<sup>189</sup> A woman is seen to complement and support her husband's work by processing the food for the family. Even with the advent of cash economy, these gender roles have not changed (Amanor, 2001).

The relatively rigid traditional division of labour remains the same in most households, with very little exceptions. More often than not, women tend to undertake tremendous responsibilities that go beyond simply "complementing" the work of men. Whitehead

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<sup>188</sup>Farming households are predominantly agricultural households where the division of labour revolves around agricultural activities. An analysis of social relations in the research area shows that gender and power relations within the family define the actions and roles of individual members, and these are based on the work that men and women do on the farm.

<sup>189</sup>Breadwinner is a European concept dating back to the Victorian days when wives were not allowed to work and husbands provided all the needs of the family. The meaning, however, differs in Ghanaian context because men do not provide all the financial and subsistence needs of the family. Wives undertake both on and off farm economic activities to support their families. In some cases their financial support supercedes those of their husbands.

(1981) stresses that the gender division of labour does not refer merely to a list of men and women's jobs, nor is it based on a set of cultural values about the suitability of various activities according to the specific gender categories. According to the author, rather, it suggests a system of allocating the labour of women and men to specific activities, and of equal importance, a system of distributing the products of these activities. The allocation of different tasks to men and women consequently has significant implications for the organization of productive processes, in that it involves issues of command and control. It also creates the necessity of exchanging and distributing between women and men, goods that their joint or separate labour has produced (Whitehead, 1981:90).

### 7.9.1 Division of Labour on Household Farms

In Abutia, the first obligation of household membership is to provide labour on household farms as a means to produce sufficient food for household needs. Household farms grow one or more staple crops (corn, cassava, yam or beans) and the staple crop is treated differently from other crops in the sense that the largest proportion is for household consumption (Swindell, 1985). Its production and distribution symbolizes the common interest of household members, yet it remains under the real and symbolic control of the household head (Whitehead, 1981). Household farms are worked primarily by household members and by hired labour. Whereas the exchange or hired labour is paid for in cash or kind, family labour is unremunerated because family members are seen to be contributing to the production of food for home consumption, and to overall household

sustenance (Nabila, 1986). For wives, and other women in the household, the provision of family labour on the household farm is also conceptually tied to their ability to access land through their husbands (Brydon and Chant, 1989). In most households, there are family or household farms and the women also have smaller individual farms. Typically, women are obligated to work as many as five days per week on these family farms (Nukunya, 1969). The women keep proceeds from the individual farms for themselves, and this is useful in cases where the family resources are controlled by the head of household. However, this situation often lengthens women's working day because they are also expected to spend adequate time on their household responsibilities, as well as other sources of livelihood such as petty trading. The situation is accentuated by male-out migration.

Pertaining to the division of labour of farm activities, research participants indicated that it is the responsibility of men to undertake the difficult and labouring work of clearing the land and harvesting, leaving the "minor farm husbandry" to the women (Mikell, 1997). We observed that this "minor farm husbandry," however, actually translates into substantial farm work for the women. The women are equally responsible for rearing small livestock in the villages, and for gathering food and fodder for the animals. They often provide most of the labour and make decisions on a wide range of post-harvest operations such as storage, handling and marketing and for off-farm food processing such as drying of food or milling (Ahooja-Patel, 1995:77). Additionally, the women are expected to proceed from the sale of farm products allocated to them for feeding and clothing the family, as well as other expenses.



### 7.9.2 Division of Labour in the Home

Respondents were asked to identify, by category of household membership, the person who participated on a regular basis in specific household chores, such as preparing meals, taking care of children, cleaning the compound, fetching firewood, managing household budget, and washing clothes. The findings show that all 107 household heads (both male and female) considered cooking as the sole responsibility of women; 100 indicated that bathing of children should only be done by women; 105 of respondents stated vehemently that fetching firewood as the responsibility of women. However, some respondents indicated that men can help cut down large tree branches on the farms, but they should not collect or bring them into the village because it is demeaning. Once again all participants indicated fetching water as the responsibility of women. They provided a caveat that women should be assisted by the children in the household. Childcare is seen as the responsibility of women, with 50 respondents indicating that men can supervise growing children. Others stated that both child care and even casual supervision should be solely a woman's responsibility, and that other female members of the household should assist the mothers.

The findings validate the responses of household heads by showing that indeed women are responsible for most of the reproductive and productive activities in the Abutia household. These include cooking, caring for a husband and children, carrying water and collecting fuel wood, cleaning the house and compound, planting and harvesting, collecting forest products for sale, and also preparing food for sale, in and

around the villages (Oppong & Abu, 1987:134-135). Women's roles in raising their children have always been paramount, and, in general, women are in charge of educating the children, that is, both at home, and also in sending them to school. As one female respondent in Abutia Kloe reflected, "I always felt that my life long responsibility is to take care of my children."<sup>190</sup>

It is clear from the discussions that the relative distribution of resource rights and obligations between women and men within the context of marriage or the household is often inequitable (Ghorayshi & Belanger, 1986). Women bear a disproportionate share of responsibilities for household maintenance, resource procurement and the provision of unremunerated agricultural labour on household farms (Ameyibor, 1993). Women's work is very demanding, and added to this is their responsibility of providing physical and emotional support to members of the extended family and community. Yet as Rocheleau et al. (1996:13) argue, women have very limited formal rights, and limited political and economic means to secure access to resources and provide for themselves and their households. This is not meant to suggest, however, that women are passive victims of social rules and structures even though they occupy a structurally disadvantaged position vis-à-vis men.

It is evident that this gender ideology is bound to continue as such values are passed from one generation to another. From the earliest childhood most young girls are socialized to expect that they will one day be responsible for child-rearing and the management of their own households, and to believe that, as women, some jobs are more appropriate for

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<sup>190</sup>Key informant - In depth interview (December, 2005).

them than other types of jobs (Mikell, 1986). Most of the mothers interviewed indicated that they teach their daughters various household tasks such as making porridge and washing dishes, whilst boys, were taught to help on the farm.

### 7.9.3 Division of Labour between Husband and Wife

The research results show that in Abutia men are generally seen as being responsible for farming, which includes cutting trees and clearing the land; gathering foods, which include trapping animals and collecting plants that are deep in the forest; and constructing houses and undertaking maintenance work (Oppong, 1987:193). Women on the other hand, must work on the farm and also be responsible for all the chores in the household. A man only assisted occasionally with household responsibilities whenever his wife was sick. The main expectation from men is to provide financially for the family. Men are typically expected to assume financial responsibility for major periodic expenditures such as school fees, housing and repairs, and health care, while women bear the cost of provisioning the household on a daily basis by providing food, clothing, children's pocket money, and other household necessities.

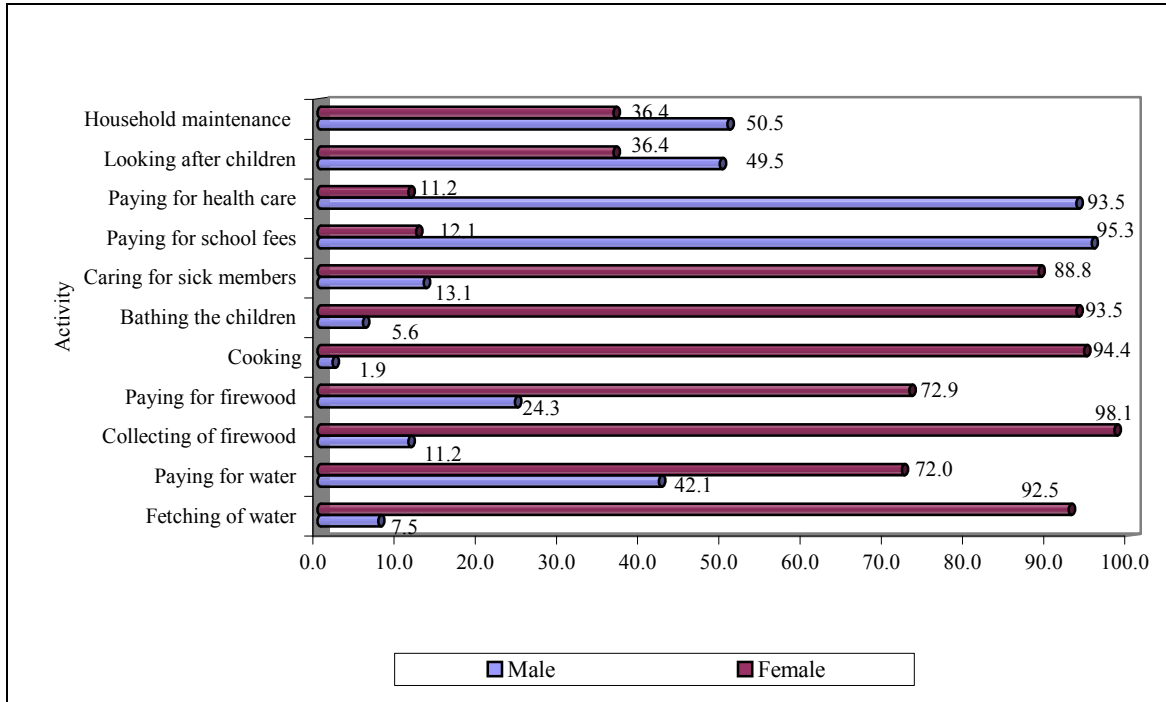
Almost all respondents indicated that the payment of schools and health expenses are the responsibility of men. They emphasized the fact that as head of his family, a man is expected to provide by working hard on the farm and elsewhere to earn money. Thus, almost every responsibility that involved the payment of money was seen as the domain

of men. However, due to changing the socio-economic climate of the rural economy, some men are unable to fulfill these financial obligations.

When interviewed regarding the different roles of husbands and wives, 65 heads of households indicated that the relationship between husband and wife is best described as complementary. However, 42 respondents stated that women work a lot harder when one considers their work on the farm and in the home. Until recently, however, the contributions of women and children within farming communities remained invisible (Benneh et al., 1995). A substantial part of women's economic activity such as farming remains officially un-documented. Women's contribution, which has suffered most from neglect and bias, include informal sector activities, home-based production, and work on family farms. Equally invisible are the gender specific constraints they encounter.

It can be seen from the foregoing that at present, the division of labour is analyzed in terms of men's and women's contributions. This method, however, does not take into account the entire farm-household, which also comprises of children and the elderly, who as shown above, contribute substantially to the household economy (Francis, 1995). A more accurate picture of the farm household's labour profile and a better understanding of intra-household dynamics would emerge if the contributions of boys and girls are also included on the basis of person-days for each on-farm and off-farm activity.

**Figure 7.3** *Activities viewed as suitable for household members by sex*



Source: Survey Data (2006)

### 7.10 Time Spent on Household Chores

Recent research in different parts of the developing world shows that women spend a disproportionately longer number of hours on household chores relative to men (Ardayfio-Schandorf, 1994). Estimates show that for women in Burkina Faso and in Nigeria, the average working day is 14 hours, 8 or 9 of which are devoted to farm work, and the remainder to non-farm work. The corresponding figure for men is between 8 and 9 hours, 7 of which in farm work, and the remainder in non-farming activities (Konseiga, 2003). In the Central Province in Cameroon, women's total weekly labour is over 64 hours, of which 26 are employed in carrying out family labour, while men's weekly labour is 32 hours (Ghorayshi & Belanger, 1996). In Abutia family work covers

one third to one half of a woman's working day and includes, in addition to cooking, time-consuming and tiring tasks such as fetching water and fuel wood.

The long working day for women in Abutia covers different types of labour, such as time spent on family farm, petty trading or any other economic activity, and household responsibilities. An important share of women's labour consists of work for the benefit of others, including unpaid family labour and farm labour for husbands and extended family members. In Abutia a woman's work day often starts at 4.30-5am and continues until 8 or 9pm. The time spent on household activities is longer in migrant households where the woman takes on an added responsibility of work that used to be performed by a male or female migrant.

The survey results show that 85% of women in migrant households work longer, as compared to 67% in non-migrant households. A respondent of one household indicated that there used to be a girl who helped with fetching water in the early mornings. However, she had been sent as a domestic to live with a migrant family in Accra. The understanding was that after one year's service to the family, she would be enrolled to learn sewing. Although this arrangement may be laudable in that it reduces the number of children to feed and clothe, it also creates more burden, as the mother now had to perform the migrant's chores. She, therefore, spends more time fetching water in the mornings and has no help with the children.

The study found that women spend a considerable amount of time fetching water each morning. This varies from 1-5 hrs, depending on whether it is the rainy season when water is more readily available close to the villages or during the dry season when villagers have to walk longer distances to fetch water. Respondents also indicated that women spend an average of 2.9 hours fetching firewood; 2.6 hours cooking; 0.7 hours bathing the children; and a maximum of about 8 hours looking after a sick family member each day when that unique situation occurs. Looking after children and collecting firewood are the most time consuming individual activities, lasting on average over 4.5 hours. In some cases, this takes as much time as 15 hours. Childcare on the other hand, tends to be combined with one or more other activities. For example, a woman could be preparing the evening meal and also keep an eye on the children.

Some male respondents argued that they work longer hours on the farm than women. They indicated that they work between 7-8 hours on the farm, on a normal day, compared to about 6-7 hours for female respondents. The men, however, acknowledged that these differences were due to time consuming household responsibilities that women perform before going to the farm. Some female respondents indicated that women worked harder than men even when they got to the farm later. They also pointed to the work that women do in and around the house throughout the day.

In spite of the differences in opinion regarding the time spent on the farm, both, male and female heads of household agreed that women have a heavier workload than men. Overall, there was consensus between male and female participants that women in Abutia

have greater responsibilities and worked longer hours. While not a detailed record of time allocation, this data allow us to understand the broad responsibilities of women. The implication of rural-urban migration on such hectic schedule for women is enormous.

### **7.11 Assistance with Household Responsibilities**

Some women in Abutia receive some help with their household responsibilities, while others do not receive any help. This help is usually from a daughter, young niece or cousin or a young distant relative. The amount of help received, however, depends on the age and skills of the helper. Daughters assist their mothers predominantly in household chores such as grinding vegetables and other ingredients for cooking, housecleaning, dishwashing, childcare, marketing and washing clothes. About a third of women in the households surveyed do not receive any help with their chores because they cannot afford to feed and clothe a young relative in exchange for her assistance.

The study found that girls aged between 10-15 years contribute twice as much as boys in terms of agricultural activities, household chores and childcare. Meanwhile they continue to contribute significantly more than men throughout their lives. With the exception of housecleaning, sons are strikingly absent from domestic duties. The assistance of girls is essential to households. As a result the migration of a girl from the



family may result in a domestic labour gap, which may subsequently result in a younger female being withdrawn from school to assist in with household chores.<sup>191</sup>

## 7.12 Primary Occupation of Households

In agricultural communities, relations within the family and in the rural community dominate the social life. Hence resources such as land, labour and capital tend to be mobilized within these communal units. The stability and success of the rural household, therefore, rests largely on its ability to organize agricultural resources and provide for its members, since social status is determined by success in farming (Kaufert, 1976). As indicated earlier in the study, Abutia is a predominantly agricultural area, with farming being the major occupation in the villages.

The majority of research participants indicated that agriculture was the primary source of their livelihood. Most of the households surveyed undertake farming mostly on smallholdings, with the farms ranging from small gardens to medium subsistence and relatively large farms.<sup>192</sup> Farming comprises the cultivation of food staples such as corn, yam, cassava, cocoyam, plantain and beans, as well as vegetables such as pepper, okra and garden eggs. Another agricultural activity is livestock rearing, which involves sheep, goats, fowls and pigs. These are generally kept under varying free-range or confined conditions. There is also very limited small-scale industrial activity including weaving

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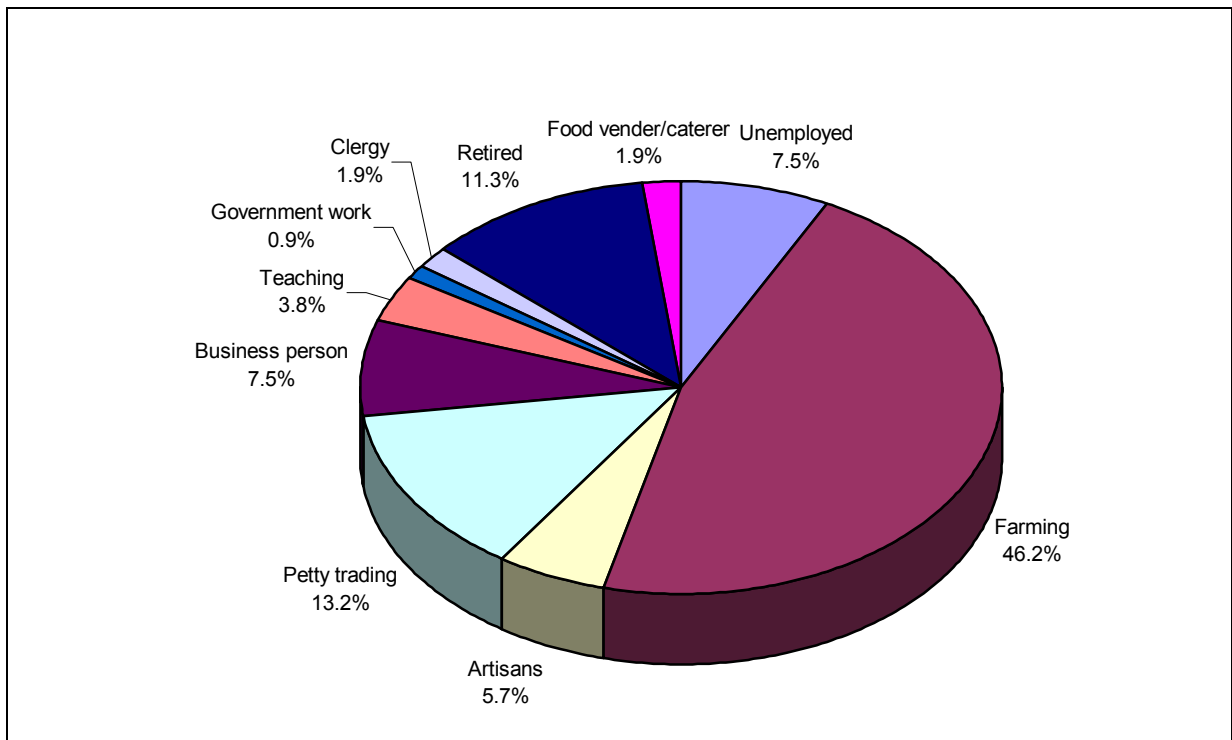
<sup>191</sup> See explanation on section 7.6 on migrant and non-migrant households.

<sup>192</sup> These farms, however, are not large enough to be considered as cash crop farms.

and tie and dye of cloths. Traditional medicine is also practiced to a limited degree as an occupation. This practice, however, is differentiated from African traditional religion.

Although land exists in relative abundance in Abutia, the villagers are unable to farm large portions due to the lack of capital resources. There is also illiteracy, lack of social amenities, lack of alternative employment opportunities and lack of access to inputs and high costs of inputs (e.g. credit, fertilizer, land labour) among others. As a result of the above factors, income from agriculture, which is the primary occupation, tends to be inadequate in meeting the needs of the Abutia communities. Due to this inadequacy, most households are compelled to engage in secondary occupations, which are a combination of farm and non-farm activities.

**Figure 7.4:** *Primary Occupation of households Surveyed*



Source: Survey data (2006)

### **7.13 Secondary Occupation of Households**

It is evident that more rural households are entering off-farm economic activities in order to diversify their livelihood. Rural women are earning small amount of cash, which is largely based on their home-making skills (Ghorayshi & Belanger, 1996; Francis, 2000). We observed during our stay in Abutia that households often pursue more than one non-farm economic activity at different points throughout the year (Kabeer, 1991). Next to farming, trading is the single most important secondary economic pursuit of the women in the households surveyed. The women engaged in petty trading and small business and other supplementary income-earning activity, depending on the means and opportunities available to each woman at any given time.

Trading, however, is not limited to agricultural products. A few women traders travel to Accra to purchase clothes, hardware, soap, sugar and other household essentials, which they resell in the villages. Very few of these female traders sometimes secure their initial capital from their husbands, but they retain the proceeds, from which they are expected to contribute to the needs of the household. Men hand over their subsistence crops to the women who cook for them and also sell some of the crops to buyers who come to the villages. Although this method is less tedious, people buy the crops at a lower price, thereby reducing the profit margin of the farmers. As a result of this, most Abutia women prefer to market the products they produce personally, and generally trade for their own benefit. Although there are no markets in the villages, women still market

the products by head-loading the crops and walking for miles to sell them in adjoining villages. The majority of them take their crops and other items to the Ho market.<sup>193</sup>

In Abutia more women are active in food vending and petty retail trade, because both have the advantage of low start-up capital requirement. These trading activities are also attractive because they require little or no training, little or no experience, and do not divert resources away from farming in a considerable way. The kinds of trading and small business activities that women initiate in Abutia are those that can generate a moderate income on a daily basis. They require little front-end investment, and can be intensified or suspended in response to the changing needs at any given time. Most of the activities are highly opportunistic in nature, involving quick responses to market demand and supply.

Maintaining flexibility and adaptability in farming, trading and small business activities is a vital coping strategy for women's multiple and changing roles and obligations inside and outside the household. Abutia women's trading activities for the most part, are characterized by a significant degree of flexibility given the competing labour demands of their fluctuating involvement in farming between rainy and dry seasons, and the unanticipated need for cash for household maintenance and farming initiatives at any given time. During farming season, women spend less time on their trading and business activities, especially during the peak labour periods for planting, weeding and harvesting.

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<sup>193</sup>Ho has a vibrant market that is organized every five days. The main problem of the villagers is getting transport early enough to take them to Ho on market days. Arriving late at the market where there is so much competition could mean that they would have to sell their products at lower prices.

At such times, some women's secondary businesses such as cooked food sales are inoperative to some extent, as they tend to their farms. However, as household income diminishes prior to harvest time, they direct the bulk of their time, labour and resources towards their off-farm trading and business ventures. Thus in spite of the flexible character of these trading activities, and despite the ability of women to organize their time and resources, these activities sometimes conflict with their farming and household responsibilities.

In addition to farming and petty trading, young women in Abutia also break stones and make gravel for road maintenance in order to earn cash. Some women manage "chop bar,"<sup>194</sup> while others sell cooked food mainly in the mornings to people going to farm. Indeed, most farming wives only have time to cook one main meal a day in the evening, and they keep left-over for the following day's lunch. If the left-over are not sufficient to make a meal, people will then buy their cooked food from these various caterers. The sale of snacks, drinks, hair plaiting and midwifery are a few of the other economic activities that women undertake in the villages. One woman owns a palm wine bar and employs other women to obtain the palm-wine from the bush. However, it is strictly the men who tap the palm trees. There are also some drinking places in the three villages. A few women can sew, but due to the high level of poverty, most people cannot afford to sew new clothes and so seamstresses cannot earn a living through sewing. Most people tend to buy second-hand clothes from the Ho market, which they find relatively cheaper

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<sup>194</sup>"Chop bar" refers to local small eating places where they prepare mainly local meals. The difference between chop bar and selling of cooked food is that chop bars are like local restaurants and sell staple foods like fufu, whilst cooked foods consist mainly of rice and stew and other snacks.

compared to sewing new clothes. The relatively more educated women in the villages work as teachers and nurses. These are the main economic activities available to people in the Abutia villages.

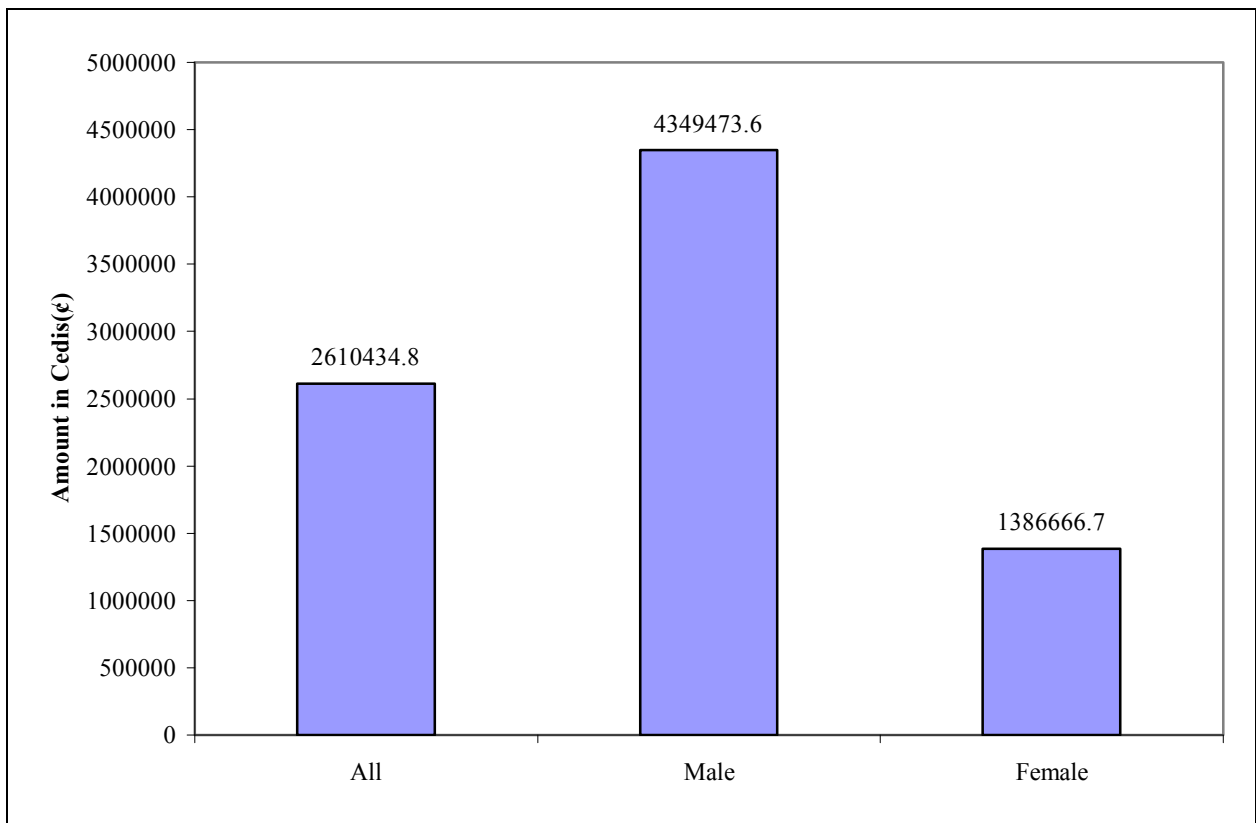
#### **7.14 Household Income and Assets**

It is clear from earlier discussions that household income in Abutia is generally low. One goal of the research was to examine the specific income level of households and implications for well being of community members. In order to estimate the level of income in the household, we asked respondents about their earnings for the year. It was difficult for respondents to answer questions pertaining to annual income because they simply spend the small amounts of money they get from day to day. Additionally, they could not put monetary value on most of the farm products. They were, therefore, asked to make estimates based on the previous year's harvests and/or total sales from agriculture and secondary economic activities.

The findings show that the average income in the area is rather low, due to the seasonal and subsistence nature of farming, resulting in a high level of poverty in the communities. On average, research participants earned about 2.6million cedis (¢2,610,434.8) which was the equivalent of \$250USD in the year 2004 as shown in figure 7.5. This is an extremely low income, particularly when compared with the average formal sector employee who earns the equivalent of \$50USD a month. Disaggregating data by gender revealed that on the average men earned more income than women. As shown in figure

7.5 below, men earned an average annual income of 4.3 million cedis (\$500USD) and women earned 1.4 million cedis (\$150USD). The earnings of women seem lower than men not necessarily because men work harder than women, but rather because women do not quantify their earnings in monetary terms, but rather use it for family consumption. For example, whilst a husband may sell his farm products and earn some income, the woman may use the greater proportion of the products from her personal farm to supplement the farm products allocated for the household.

**Figure 7.5:** *Average Income Earned from Economic Activities in 2004*



Source: Survey Data (2006)

It is evident from the research findings that the people of Abutia experience a high level of poverty and deprivation. As a researcher, I understand the term “poverty”, yet our stay

in the villages provided us with greater insight into lived realities of poor people, which in Ghana is concentrated in the rural areas (Bukh, 1979; Mikell, 1997). While poverty can be a blunt term, the desperate circumstances under which the people of Abutia are confronted with, is unimaginable (Lipton, 1977).

We observed that even among the poor, some households could be more deprived than others. Some members of the households surveyed live in inadequate housing, and possessed neither a bed nor more than two pairs of shoes. During participant observation, we saw that only few households were able to afford one balanced meal a day. The nutritional content of most meals was very low. For example, for an afternoon meal, we observed a family eat the staple dish “akple” prepared from corn flour and pepper with salt and water and very little ground dry fish. This food consisted mainly of carbohydrates with virtually no protein. The incidence of malnutrition amongst the people, especially children in the area is high.

In order to further assess the level of poverty and determine the asset holdings of the households surveyed, respondents were asked about ownership of particular household goods such as radios and television sets, telephones and modes of transportation. Ownership of these items was used as an indicator of a household’s socio-economic well-being. The results show that 42 out of the 107 households surveyed in the three villages owned a radio, 10 households had bicycles, while none of the households own a television or refrigerator. It is striking to note that more than half of household surveyed did not possess any of the items identified. This could be attributed to the fact that the



limited income of most households is spent mainly on consumption goods. The study further shows that it is mainly migrant households that possess such durable assets.

### **7.15 Household Budgetary Contributions**

In Ghana it is not the norm for men and women to pool resources and jointly make household spending decisions (Oppong, 1987). In Abutia, men and women tend to have separate income and expenditure streams. Using their individual income and resources, spouses take care of their own gender-specific responsibilities (both material and financial), which extend beyond the immediate household to include external family members (Bukh, 1979). As a result, household spending patterns are often closely linked to the levels of income generated by gender. The reality, however, is increasingly different as agricultural incomes decline and women earn more from trading. Due to this situation women are increasingly taking up more material and financial responsibility in the household, as evidenced in Abutia.

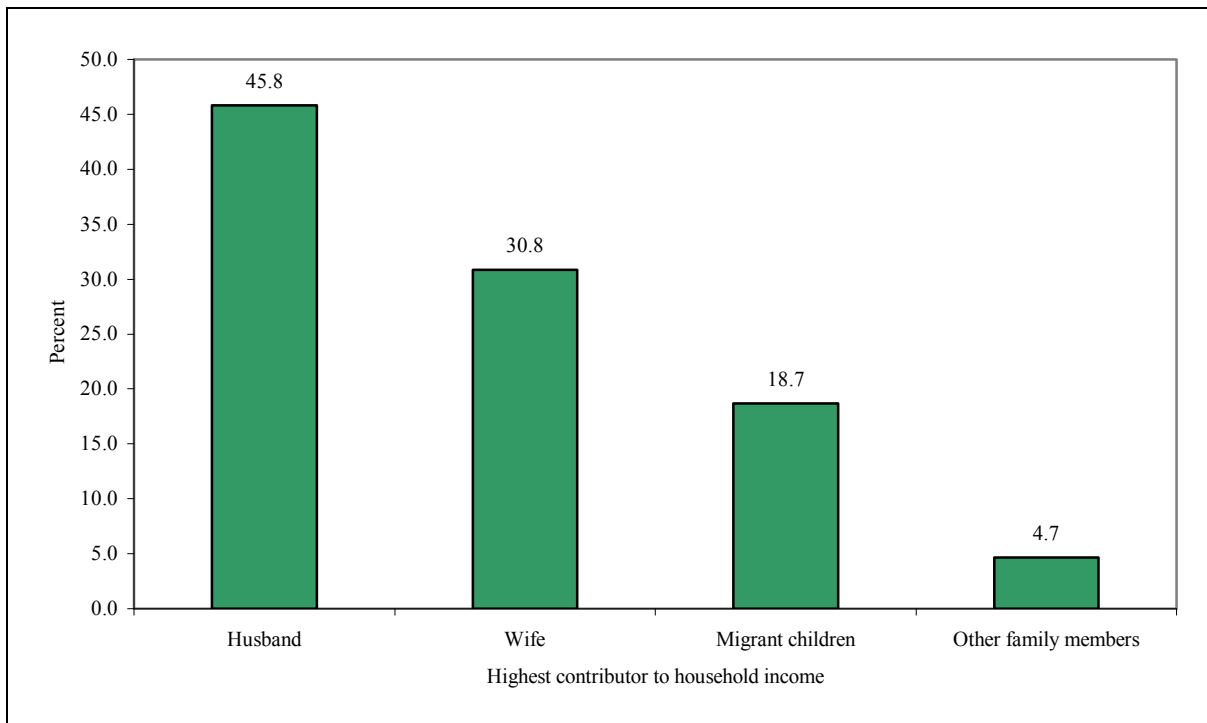
The study found that although individuals in Abutia have the right to spend their money as they choose, this right is hindered by each spouse's respective economic responsibilities and capability. A few of the households surveyed have attempted to pool together incomes within the domestic unit, but this arrangement has not worked effectively. According to Brydon and Chant (1989), divided financial responsibilities between spouses imply that although spouses jointly contribute to the financial well-being of the household, they do so in a relatively restricted, well-defined, and socially

recognized manner. This means they have separate allocative priorities. For example, in the Abutia situation, men are supposed to take care of major family expenses while women take care of minor ones. Maintaining separate income streams, therefore, enables both spouses to meet their respective social obligations within the kingship and extended family systems. This arrangement also allows women to invest in other social networks, which improve their relative bargaining power within marital relationships and provide a measure of insurance in the case of marital disruption (Oppong, 1987).

The research findings show that even in a rural setting such as Abutia, women are significant contributors to the family income, and are now being perceived by the community as such. As shown in Figure 7.6, the study found that men contribute 46% of financial resources to the family while women contribute 31%. Migrant children contribute 19% to the household income, with other family members contributing 5%. Pertaining to the contributions of migrant children, 87% of male migrants contribute to the family income, as compared to 69% of female migrants. This difference could be attributed to the fact that most male migrants gain better employment than females who are mostly involved in petty trading. It can be inferred from the contribution categories that husbands are the highest contributors to household income. These numbers, however, are not fully representative of the contributions of women in the households surveyed. This is because most of the contributions made by women for the family are not valued in monetary terms.

Apart from their contributions in terms of earnings, Abutia rural women also supply subsistence foodstuffs, and contribute a tremendous amount of time in performing a range of unpaid tasks such as fetching water and firewood, cooking, processing and conserving food and providing care and welfare of family and community members (Mikell, 1997). One would expect that as women diversify their livelihood and earn some income, they also assert a right to determine how that income is spent. This, however, is not the case as women have little influence in economic and political spheres of households and communities, even though their contributions to daily subsistence often equals or sometimes exceeds that of men.

**Figure 7.6: Average Contributions to Household Income**



Source: Survey data (2006)

During our research in Abutia, some women argued that it was they, and not their husbands, who assumed primary responsibility for basic needs (food and other household necessities), and still assisted their husbands with major periodic expenditures such as school fees, clothing and health care. This situation provides a striking example of contradiction between gender ideologies and conjugal economics, between social norms and ideals, and expectations of males as breadwinners, and the practical role of women as the day-to-day providers of household sustenance (Potts, 2000). This is evidenced in the increasing number of women who are forced by circumstances to assume greater economic responsibilities vis-à-vis husbands within the household economy.

For example, one issue of concern voiced by many married people in Abutia is the growing tendency of men to default on many of their gendered obligations as husbands and as fathers, and their inability to provide for the material and financial well-being of their families. As one woman who runs a small “chop bar” said:

“I am responsible for purchasing most of the food items that we do not cultivate, as well as food supplements like fish, salt and spices that my family requires, and for preparing this food for my husband and children. From the income I earn from the farm and the chop bar, I purchase most of the clothing for my children including special clothes for Christmas and other special days. In addition to all these, I purchase clothing and other necessities for myself.”

“My husband is supposed to take care of the children’s school fees, which includes their books and uniforms, and he is responsible for the family’s hospital expenses. But you know something, my husband is irresponsible with his money....and he does not meet all this family responsibilities. In many cases I must use my income to help him take care of his responsibilities.”<sup>195</sup>

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<sup>195</sup>This is a personal narrative of Akpene Senahia, a participant in one of the focus group discussions. (Research data 2006).

In response to women's claims that men have failed to meet their financial obligations as husbands, men also declared that Abutia women had unrealistic expectations of incomes derived from household farms. As one husband insisted:

“I farm about 10 acres of land, and as head of my household I decide how the earnings from the farm are best spent. My wife complains and complains. She sees her neighbour with a new dress and accuses me of cheating her and calls me a bad husband. Hmmm, but she does not realize that the cost of things is high and our money is rather small. The household farm benefits all of us, and so my wife is obligated to work on the farm, but she is influenced by other women in the village and so continues to oppose me, calling me a bad husband.”<sup>196</sup>

Thus the reality of the financial situation of rural households is that given the rising costs of living, men's incomes alone cannot meet the family's financial needs. Insufficient male income, chronic un/under employment among men in the informal sector, and the migration of men to urban areas in search of work, have dramatically transformed patterns of domestic budgetary responsibilities (Francis, 2000). Even among households in which men earn a relatively sustainable income from urban employment, some women reported that their husbands often failed to meet their respective financial obligations. This situation compelled some of them to provide for the material and financial well-being of their households. The decline in agricultural income for men in Abutia, and their inability to meet their financial responsibilities, has caused many to seek income opportunities in urban areas. This is because people are well aware of livelihood conditions outside the village, and some choose to, and are able to act on that knowledge.

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<sup>196</sup>This is a personal narrative of Kweku Duah. Participant in FGDs, field research data 2006.

## **7.16 Conclusion**

This chapter discussed the general socio-economic and demographic information on both households surveyed and head of households who participated in the study. The study shows that women bear a disproportionate share of responsibilities for household maintenance, resource procurement and the provision of unremunerated agricultural labour on household farms, and yet as Potts, (2000:83) argues, they have very limited formal rights, and limited political and economic means to secure access to resources and provide for themselves and their households.

Although the gender division of rights and obligations are not naturalized divisions, they are sanctioned and idealized by society as a whole and underpins patriarchal ideologies. This is not meant to suggest however, that women are passive victims of social rules and structures even though they occupy a structurally disadvantaged position vis-à-vis men. This background information is deemed important in the interpretation of the survey results, since the behaviour of women and men concerning migration and livelihood, is known to be influenced by their characteristics as well as their environment.

## CHAPTER 8

### CHARACTERISTICS OF MIGRANTS

“My friends and I are planning to move to Accra in search of our fortune because there is no future in the village. We completed Senior Secondary School (SSS) last year but have not been able to find a job because there are no jobs in the village except farming. Secondly, our parents do not have money to pay our school fees in the Polytechnic. As a result of frustration and idleness, we get drunk and misbehave, which reflects badly on us, but we are not bad people. We are simply frustrated. We want a profession other than farming, which our parents and grandparents did, but we can only find a different employment outside the villages.....in Accra or other big cities.....”<sup>197</sup>

#### 8.1 Introduction

Contemporary rural-urban migration in Ghana is a selective process in the sense that migrants generally have certain characteristics that distinguish them from their population of origin. Within households, migrants are seen to have a greater potential to generate income during migration. A number of surveys of migrants are available in Ghana, which provide some insight into the demographic and other characteristics of Ghanaian migrants, but these surveys focus mainly on international migrants (Anarfi et al., 2003). Our knowledge of the characteristics of internal migrants is dominated by the work of Caldwell who surveyed 14,000 people in both rural and urban areas of the country.

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<sup>197</sup> Kojo Ohene (School Leaver, Interview participant at Abutia Agorve, January 23, 2006).

Researches by other authors such as Patricia Kaufert (1976), Jette Bukh (1979), and Lynne Brydon (1987) provide some coverage of the socio-economic and migration situation in the Ho district. This chapter now presents data analysis of the characteristics of migrants from the research area. The main characteristics are categorized into three main groups, namely demographic, including age and sex, educational and economic characteristics of migrants. Other data include the household migration decision, the determinants and types of migration in the Abutia communities and other relevant migrant data. Lastly, the chapter presents data from interviews with members of the Abutia association in Accra.

## **8.2 Household Migration Decision-Making**

In Ghana, migration results from a complex series of implicit and explicit negotiations that occur within the household.<sup>198</sup> More often than not, the decision to migrate is made on rational justifications so that a household can maximize expected gains (Anarfi et al., 2003). The study shows that in Abutia the decision to migrate is rarely made by individuals acting on their own. Instead, the migration decision-making process often involves entire families as well as their wider social structures and networks. Households normally select and invest in an individual who has the greatest potential to support the household in terms of remittances (Agesa & Agesa, 2001). For these households, migration is not just about an individual's choice of physical relocation, but it is often a

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<sup>198</sup>As discussed earlier in the study, the household in the research area is underpinned by inter-dependent kinship relationships, of which there is a head, either male or female that looks after the general welfare of household members. See Brydon and Chant (1989:94-120)



decision about who stays at home farming, and who goes out to earn wages. Adepoju (1995:47) describes this decision-making process as follows: “in maximizing household resource allocation and utilization, senior members of the family decide who should migrate, just in the same way they decide what piece of land should be cultivated, and who should be sent to school.”

As indicated earlier in the dissertation, all major decisions in Abutia households are either made or approved by heads of households. It follows that all decisions pertaining to migration are also approved by heads of households. The majority of heads of households (95) indicated that migration was a household decision, while 12 households stated that the decision to migrate was made by the potential migrant and that the household mainly ratified it and looked for resources to assist the individual.

Most respondents stated that due of the inadequacy of agriculture, they consider migration as a risk-averse livelihood strategy (Chambers & Conway, 1992). They indicated that the decision is seen as an economic investment, and that household members and sometimes members of the community raise funds for transportation cost and use networks to assist the migrants. As such, the natural expectation is that the migrant will remit to the household when he or she is well settled in the destination area. A few respondents asserted that in addition to the economic reasons, migration also alleviates the frustration of young men, thereby allowing them some independence through migration (Findley & Sow, 1998).

Respondents were asked whether they would more readily approve the migration of male or female household members. The research results show that 72 respondents said that they would rather approve the migration of males; 25 indicated that they would approve the migration of females, while the remaining 10 were undecided. The reasons given ranged from the “male breadwinner” concept to the temptations that women migrants face in the cities (Adepoju 1995:329; Potts, 2000:107). Some respondents argued that it is better for women to migrate because they are more empathetic and responsible towards their aging parents and siblings. They argued further that even though the remittances women send home are relatively smaller compared to that of men, they are more regular. Additionally, women provide a lot of intangible support. These findings confirm the notion that the cultural context within which decisions are made assigns different values to activities and characteristics of men and women (Fan, 2003).

### **8.3 Determinants of Migration from Abutia**

A persistent theme in the studies of migration is a search for, and explanation of individual or household attributes which increase or decrease the propensity to migrate. The study explored the determinants and motivations of migration from Abutia in order to obtain the perspective of the community concerning these issues. The research team asked respondents for possible reasons behind migration from the villages. This section discusses the research results from Abutia and drawing, where appropriate, on work carried out in other countries. The determinants will be categorized mainly under socio-

economic and socio-cultural factors. The gender implications of these determinants are also be discussed.

### 8.3.1 Economic Determinants

The causes of migration are usually explained by using two broad categories, namely, push and pull factors. For example, people of a certain area may be pushed off by poverty to move towards a town for employment, while a better employment or higher education facility may pull people to avail these opportunities. People's decision to migrate from one place to another therefore, may be influenced by both economic and non-economic factors within the household (Todaro, 1969). The households surveyed cited economic reasons as the major reasons people migrate from Abutia to the urban centers. The economic factors cited include lack of jobs in the villages, extreme poverty, no future prospects, and the possibility of better employment opportunities in the cities.<sup>199</sup> Migration from Abutia is, therefore, largely induced by the household and migrants' expectation of employment and higher wages in the destination area.

For example, as indicated earlier, men as perceived as the breadwinners and therefore, they cannot just sit in the rural home with no source of income. They are expected to migrate and make enough money to take care of their families (Mosse et al., 2002:61). During our research, about 85 respondents indicated that it is the man's responsibility to

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<sup>199</sup>As indicated earlier, a household's migration decision is not only influenced by actual jobs available in the cities, but also by the perceived prospect of finding jobs (Todaro, 1977).

work and provide financial support to his family. 23 respondents indicated that women should assist the men with financial responsibilities. Indeed, such expectation may explain further why there are more male migrants from Abutia in Accra.

About 80 respondents also stated that members of their households migrated to a particular destination for better employment opportunities. This study, therefore, lends support to the Harris-Todaro thesis, which relates the process of migration to the probability of getting jobs in the urban areas and the perceived existence of higher wages and differences in expected earning (Harris & Todaro, 1970). Perceived income differentials therefore, contribute significantly to internal migration from Abutia. Most migrants find work in the informal sector of large cities such as Accra, the national capital. The large informal sector points to the fact that regardless of skill, the migrant population can find diversified livelihood opportunities in the towns and cities.

The findings of our study are supported by research conducted by Elizabeth Francis (2000:114) among the Luo in the Kisumu district of Kenya. Francis observed that “in Luoland, several generations of men have spent the bulk of their working lives outside the district and provided for their families.” The author also noted that most migrants’ wives stayed at home growing crops to feed their children and perhaps some petty trading to earn some cash to supplement the family income.

In a study on migration in Ghana in 1969, John Caldwell asserted that both internal and international migration has been motivated mainly by economic considerations. Motives

that the author cites for migration include the desire for better economic opportunities, prestige and other similar economic motives, as well as preference for town life and its sophistication. He argued that the trends of migration in the country have been directed towards regions and towns with relatively better economic prosperity. Caldwell's research, although conducted about three decades ago, are supported by findings from this study.

### 8.3.2 Socio-Cultural Determinants

While economic motivations are without exception the main reasons people migrate from Abutia, these reasons tend to overlap with socio-cultural expectations (Litchfield & Waddington, 2003:74). Another reason cited by heads of households as a determinant of rural-urban migration from the villages is the lack of basic rural infrastructure in the communities and rural-urban inequality in resources (Deshingkar & Grimm, 2005:94).<sup>200</sup> Respondents were able to identify that it is the differences in prospects and infrastructure between Abutia and Accra that drew people to migrate. There is no doubt that, apart from better income opportunities, urban areas also offer a chance to enjoy a better lifestyle. The provision of services such as electricity, piped water supply and other public services make urban areas attractive. This finding lends support to a study conducted by Ewusi (1986:41) on the causes of migration, in which the author found that

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<sup>200</sup>The lack of these basic services, together with economic and other socio-cultural, factors tend to serve as "push" factors in the migration process. Our findings, however, reveal that economic factors superceded the lack of rural infrastructure as the main determinant of migration from the area.

depressed social conditions at the place of origin are compelling motivations for rural people to migrate.

Although Ghana's socio-economic development status has improved significantly over the last two decades, considerable disparities still exist in the distribution of the benefits of development between rural and urban areas, as well as between regions (Awumbila, 2001). Urban migration has been increasing and it is likely that this has been encouraged to some extent by the poor living condition in some rural areas.<sup>201</sup> While the motives for rural movement are important in themselves, the means of movement are also of importance. Improvements in transport systems: enduring kin networks spanning rural-urban areas and increasingly awareness of the urban areas through the media and telecommunication, helped by improved educational standards are equally important factors to be taken into account when dealing with rural to urban migration in Ghana.

#### **8.4 Types of Migration in Abutia**

There are generally two types of out-migration from the Abutia communities.<sup>202</sup> These are long term rural-urban migration, and seasonal migration, which is more of a rural-rural migration. Although data on seasonal migration in Ghana is lacking, a growing number of micro-studies have established that seasonal migration for agricultural

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<sup>201</sup>As indicated earlier, about 70% of Ghanaians live in rural areas, principally as subsistence farmers and the majority lack access to basic social services (GSS, 2002).

<sup>202</sup> Migration is not just undertaken by the very poor during times of crisis for survival and coping but has increasingly become an accumulative option for the poor and non-poor alike.

employment is growing (Twumasi-Ankrah, 1995). While long-term migration is mainly to the cities, especially Accra, some migrants also hire their labour seasonally to farmers in the cocoa growing areas, which experience better rainfall patterns, and therefore earlier harvests (Swindell, 1985). The migrants, therefore, are able to complete the farming activities in these places and return to work on their own farms. Thus seasonal migration of labour for employment has also become one of the most durable components of the livelihood strategies of people living in the rural areas of Abutia.

In an attempt to obtain empirical evidence on the types of migration that occur in the Abutia communities, the research team asked heads of households specific questions that distinguished between long-term and seasonal forms of migration. The findings show that long-term rural-urban migration, which is reported by all of the households surveyed, is the predominant form of migration from Abutia. This is followed by 42 households with seasonal migration and 3 households with international migrants. There are 25 households whose members undertake both rural-urban and seasonal migration.

During interviews, heads of households surveyed reiterated that migration is imperative to protect the livelihood of their households. These responses emphasize the point that many farmers in the research area perceive their communities as a place where livelihood security cannot be attained through agriculture alone (Potts, 2004:181). Respondents also asserted that both long-term and seasonal migrations are beneficial to the villages. However, they opined that whilst long-term migration secured livelihood for the household through remittances, the seasonal labour migrants bring home foodstuffs from

the farms as well as money to buy supplements like fish, salt and “provisions.”<sup>203</sup> The participants were of the opinion that migration, whether seasonal or long-term, increases the average monthly per capita household income, and is beneficial to the communities.



PLATE 8.1: A seasonal migrant returns to Abutia from Twiso-Praso.<sup>204</sup>

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<sup>203</sup>Provisions are commodities such as sugar, milk, milo, tea, and soap. They tend to be referred to as essential commodities. This is because most of these items, especially the food items, are considered luxury items and are purchased only after a household has afforded basic local food items like corn flour for porridge, staple foods and vegetables.

<sup>204</sup> See discussions on seasonal migrants in Section 8.4



## 8.5 Demographic Characteristics of Migrants

The personal characteristics of age and sex are important in any analysis dealing with migration and livelihood. An analysis of migration differential by age reveals the impact of migration on socioeconomic and demographic structures at both the places of destination and origin (Anarfi et al., 2001). Although the process of rural-urban migration is not limited to any specific age group, it is an activity that tends to be undertaken primarily by young adults all over the world. Todaro (1970) postulates that migrants typically do not represent a random sample of the overall population, but tend to be young, better educated, and more achievement-oriented and have better personal contacts. In SSA generally, labour migration, particularly over greater distances, tends to be dominated by young men (de Haan, 2000).

Early studies of migration in Ghana have also noted the high proportion of men in the rural-urban migration streams (Caldwell, 1969). In recent times, however, the proportion of women has gradually increased (GSS, 2000a). In part, this increase is associated with more permanent migrants bringing their families to town, and to a lesser extent, the independent migration of women to work mainly in the informal sector of the urban centers (ibid). In Abutia, although the drift of the rural folk into the city is not limited to any age grouping, migrants from the study area represent a more youthful population. The study found that migration is predominantly male, but there is an increasing number of female migrants as well. This situation narrows the gap between male and female

migrants to a large extent. Thus the findings of Brydon (1987) and the GSS (2000a) are supported by the findings of this study.

### 8.5.1 Age of Migrants

As indicated in the previous section, the study of migration differentials in Abutia at individual levels indicates that persons involved in the process of rural out-migration are young adults. Most of them were either engaged in farming, or studies, or were unemployed before migration. The majority of migrants from the households surveyed in Abutia are within the (20-40) age bracket. This accounts for a total of 343 of all migrants within the area. However, the (20-30) age bracket is the singular most dominant age group within which people migrate. There are 195 young adults who have migrated from this age bracket. This suggests that migration among both men and women is concentrated more densely in the (20-29) age bracket.

The proportion of migrants decreases with an increase in age group. For example, 148 people have migrated from the (31-40) age bracket; this decreased to 64 people who have migrated from the (41-50) age bracket from the households surveyed. These older migrants are mainly older women and widows. Women are more likely than men to travel in the oldest age bracket, mainly to live with their children and take care of their grandchildren in the urban centers.

**Table 8.2: Age of Migrants**

<b>Age Group (Yrs)</b>	<b><i>Number of migrants</i></b>
< 20	40
20 – 30	195
31 – 40	148
41 – 50	64
51 – 60	25
61 – 70	5
71 – 80	2
Total	479

Source: Survey Data (2006)

The age distribution of migrants in Abutia is in line with findings of a study by Zachariah and Conde (1981), in which the authors found that most migrants fall within the (15-39) age bracket. The authors argue that after age 50, older men witness a greater drop in migration. The demographic characteristics of migrants portrayed above have implications for the sending households, especially women.<sup>205</sup> Table 8.1 shows the demographic characteristics of migrants.

### 8.5.2 Sex of Migrants

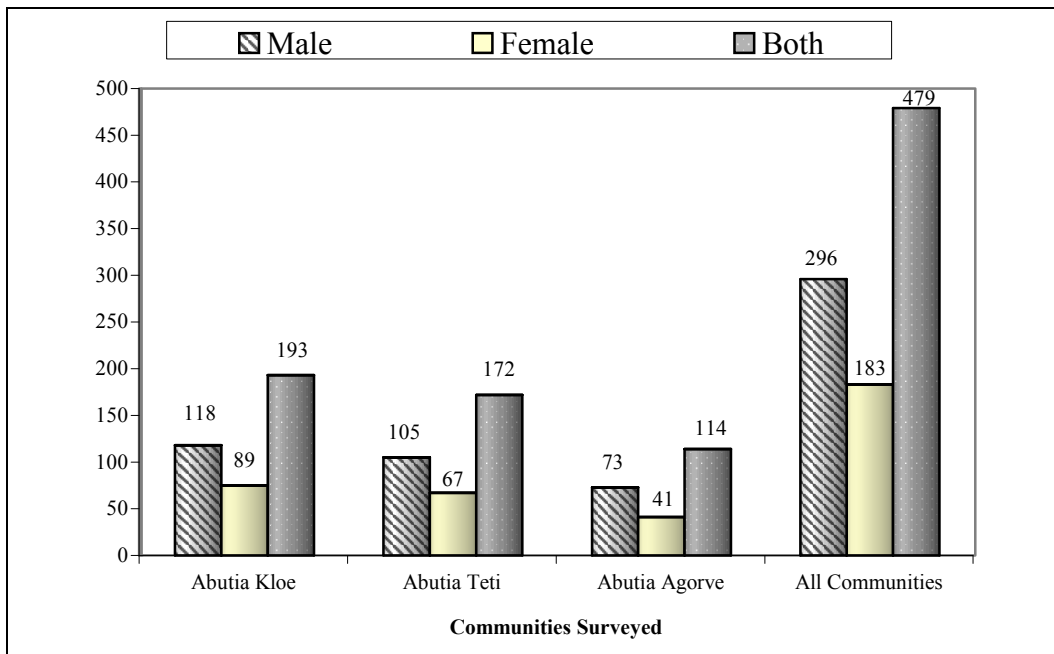
Gender is perhaps the most important form of social differentiation that influences migration.<sup>206</sup> The composition of migration streams are diverse, and may be changing over time. As indicated earlier, over the last 50 years, one of the basic characteristics of the migration system has been the increasing participation of women in population

<sup>205</sup> See detailed discussion of implications in Chapter 9.

<sup>206</sup> See Chapter 2.

movement. In patriarchal systems like the one that dominates most Ghanaian ethnic groups, women are expected to be homemakers who stay behind and manage the rural household whilst the husband migrates. However, the economic reality of today, is determining a new trend as more women migrate into the urban areas. Our study in Abutia revealed that a large proportion of migrants are young adult males. However, not only men migrate from the study area, but women as well. Figure 8.1 shows that during the time of our research, migrants consisted of 296 males compared to 186 females. These add to a total of 479 people who have migrated over the years from households surveyed.

**Figure 8.1: Sex Composition of Migrants**



Source: Survey Data (2006)

Further analysis of migration from Abutia reveals interwoven gender relations, which influence the patterns of migration (Anarfi, 1981). For example, although migrants are predominantly male, there are a number of females migrating from the area. It is clear from the research findings that women are moving independently of, and often, despite the wishes of fathers and husbands.<sup>207</sup> Most of them are now migrating for work in the informal sector, and not just accompanying spouses. The increase in the migration of women in Abutia could be attributed to the changing socio-economic structure of the country, which has resulted in the social acceptance of women's economic independence and mobility. Thus although the number of women migrating from Abutia into the cities is smaller than men, yet there is a progressive increase in female migration, necessitating an examination of the causes of the migration of women from the communities.

Unlike men, women's "push factors" from Abutia are not always economic, as the economic factors overlap with socio-cultural factors (Lipton, 1980). Key among these are socio-cultural factors that include access to, and control over economic resources, right of inheritance for women, marital unhappiness, and lack of social services (Awusabo-Asare, 1990). The findings show that although 36% of the women who migrated from the villages were married, the propensity to migrate was higher among single women, 54% of who had migrated.<sup>208</sup> Widowed women, for instance, are more likely to migrate because they are not entitled to land inheritance in the Abutia villages where the patriarchal system recognizes men as the inheritors of land (Awumbila, 2001).

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<sup>207</sup> See Chapter 2.

<sup>208</sup> Thus in the case of female rural-urban migration, "pull" factors are often reduced to a false distinction between associational non-economic and economic motives. Associational pull factors have to some extent hidden an often very different reality. See Chapter 3.

If a widow does not have grown sons, the land that belonged to her late husband might be inherited by the husband's brothers, unless she is well informed and/or an educated woman who may have had some of their property in their joint names or in her name.

Most of these widows were compelled to migrate and stay with their children in the cities. Additionally, women who are unable to have children and those who may have been involved in incestuous or other unacceptable relationships also migrate to the urban areas where they may start afresh, without feeling persecuted by the rural communities that know them so well. Migration, therefore, provides the socially acceptable alternative for young women who try to escape from familial and community control. It can be particularly significant for women as it usually entails a marked change in status from unpaid family farm workers to employees or to self employment in urban areas. Socio-cultural expectations of gender and gender-specific constraints, therefore, play a major role in migration decisions.

### 8.5.3 Educational and Skills Characteristics of Migrants

One of the more consistent findings of rural-urban migration studies is the positive correlation between educational attainment and migration. According to Todaro (1969), a clear association is found between the level of completed education and the propensity to migrate. The author argues that people with more years of schooling, everything being equal, are more likely to migrate than those with less schooling. In a comprehensive study of migration in Tanzania by Anderssen (2001), the relationship between education

and migration was clearly documented, especially in terms of the influence of declining urban employment opportunities on the educational characteristics of migrants. In his study, the author found secondary school leavers to constitute a rising proportion of the migration stream. The explanation that Anderssen offered was that limited urban employment opportunities were being rationed by educational levels, and only workers with at least some secondary education had a chance of finding a job.

The findings of my research supports other studies that indeed the probability of migration increases with the rise in education. The study shows that migrants from Abutia tend to be relatively better educated and/or skilled than non-migrants who remain in the villages. The survey results indicate that out of the 479 people, who have migrated from the households surveyed, 100 of them had primary school education; 210 migrants had attained secondary level education; 119 had some level of tertiary education; and 50 migrants were illiterates.<sup>209</sup> The survey results show further that 96% of male migrants were educated, compared to 57% of female migrants. It is evident from this result that the rate of migration increases with a higher level of education.

A high rate of migration for relatively educated people may be due to the fact that there is a little scope for them for getting a suitable job in the rural areas. Furthermore, many relatively educated youth migrate because they are reluctant to practice agriculture. They hope to be able to use even a minimum level of education to secure higher income jobs and attain a relatively higher social status than what they have in Abutia. Since such jobs

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<sup>209</sup>This level comprises any educational attainment that is higher than senior secondary level, such as polytechnic, teacher's training college, university, and other professional colleges.

are not available in the villages, they are compelled to move into the urban centers. This study results not only reveal the higher propensity of educated people to migrate, but also show that secondary school leavers form a high proportion of total rural-urban migrants from Abutia.

The results further reveal that the lack of education did not deter the uneducated villagers from migrating. This is because all migrants expect to find jobs, with the educated migrants hoping to find jobs in the formal sector, and the uneducated ones hoping to find jobs in the informal sector. Few educated people have been successful in finding jobs in the formal sector, as a result of their persistence, and also through previously established networks. However, some migrants have been compelled to face the realities of life in the city and seek alternative forms of employment and forget their diplomas. Migration thus tends to drain rural areas of these individuals who could have played a vital role in increasing the productivity of the rural economy.

## 8.6 Position of Migrant in Household

Several studies have argued that migration is positively related with family size (Anh et al., 2003). In other words, people migrate mostly from large households, because it is easier to spare members of such households to migrate for work.<sup>210</sup> However, results from our study show that family size *per se* has no significant effect on out-migration. It

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<sup>210</sup>For the purposes of this analysis, it is important to differentiate between households and family units within the household. Within the context of this study, family units represent small and medium family units whilst the household consist of various family units that comprise extended families living within the same compound.



is the number of adult male members in a household rather than the family size, which seems to determine migration of members.

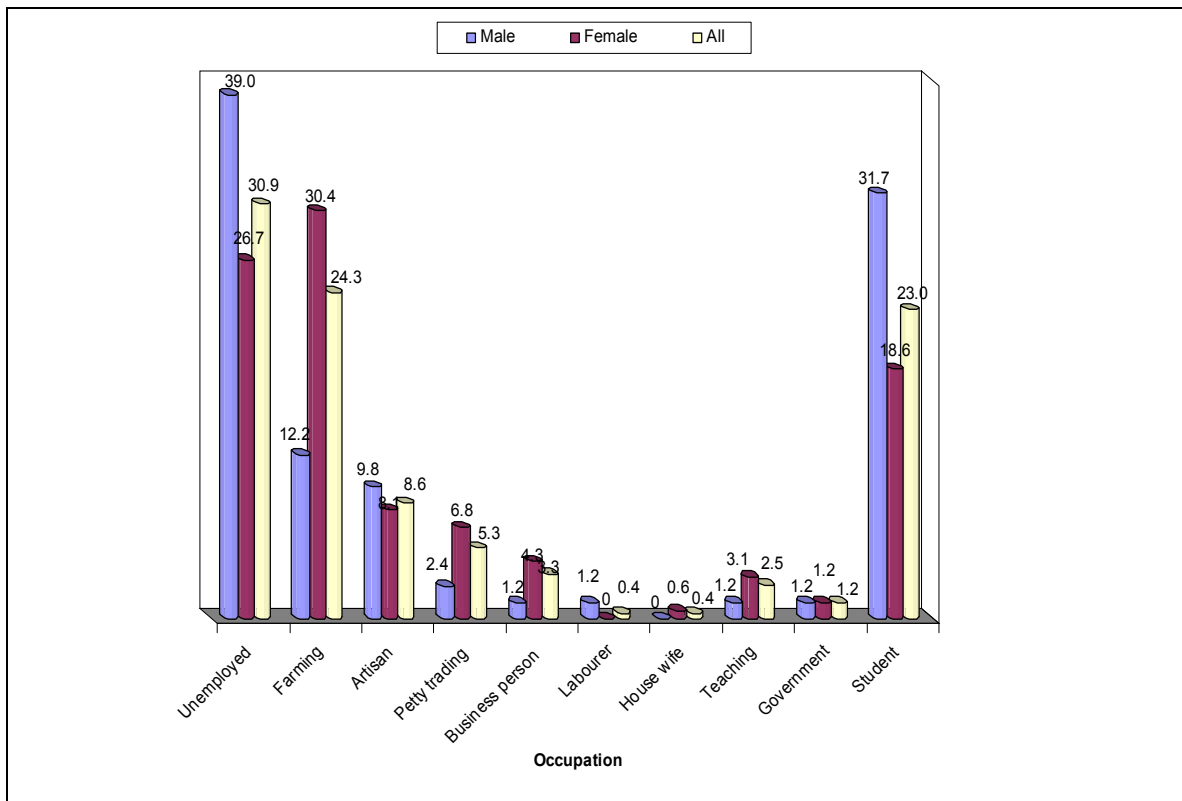
As indicated earlier, households in the Abutia villages are predominantly composed of extended families, which are intermingled with a few nuclear families. Our research findings show that 62% of households with more than 2 adult male members also had more than 1 migrant. On the other hand, only 38% of households who had less than 2 adult male members had more than 1 migrant. Thus it can be inferred from the data that the higher the number of males in a household, the greater the probability of people migrating from that household. This situation seemed to be due to the fact that it is easier to allow or “spare” people to migrate, and still have some members at home to work and manage the household farm.

An examination of the position of migrants in the households surveyed indicates that only 40% of the 479 migrants are considered heads of households. Meanwhile 64% of male migrants and 26% of women migrants are considered heads of individual family units within the household. A head of a family unit is usually a relatively younger husband. The head of household on the other hand, is usually the eldest male who heads two or more family units or group of extended family members residing on the same compound. These migrant heads of family units, who are mostly males, are in turn classified as members of the extended households. The women were much more likely to be the daughters of the household head and the men husbands who have their own families, but are represented as a family unit within the larger household.

## 8.7 Occupation of Migrants Prior to Migration

The pre-migration occupation of migrants helps to better understand the factors that serve as motivation for migration. Prior to migration, some of the migrants were primarily self-employed as farmers, artisans or in various capacities in the rural informal sector. Others were either students or unemployed (Potts, 2004). It was observed that although agriculture constitutes the primary source of livelihood in Abutia, heads of households declared the occupation of only 30% of migrants as farmers prior to migration. Another 30% were declared as students, with the remaining 30% declared as unemployed prior to migration. The distribution of migrants according to their occupation at the place of origin (prior to migration) is shown in Figure 8.2.

**Figure 8.2: Occupation of Migrants Prior to Migration**



Source: Survey Data (2006)

About half of the migrants who were declared as unemployed prior to migration also cultivated small plots. The high percentage of unemployment declared is due to the fact that some heads of household felt that the subsistence level farming of some migrants prior to migration was not adequate enough to be considered employment. It was evident that migration whether by subsistence farmers, labourers or the unemployed, is an indication of unemployment, poverty and a lack of job prospects, while migration by the students signifies inadequate educational facilities in the villages.

Slight variations are observed when the occupations are analyzed using a gender lens. From a gender perspective, it was seen that farmers, the unemployed and students are the people who are seen to often migrate among men. Female migrants, however, were described predominantly as unemployed, even though they were also involved in the various limited occupations available in the villages. This variation may be explained by occupational and vocational inclinations, since most of the work undertaken by females is not seen to carry any value (Tacoli, 2002).

## **8.8 Occupation of Migrants at Destination**

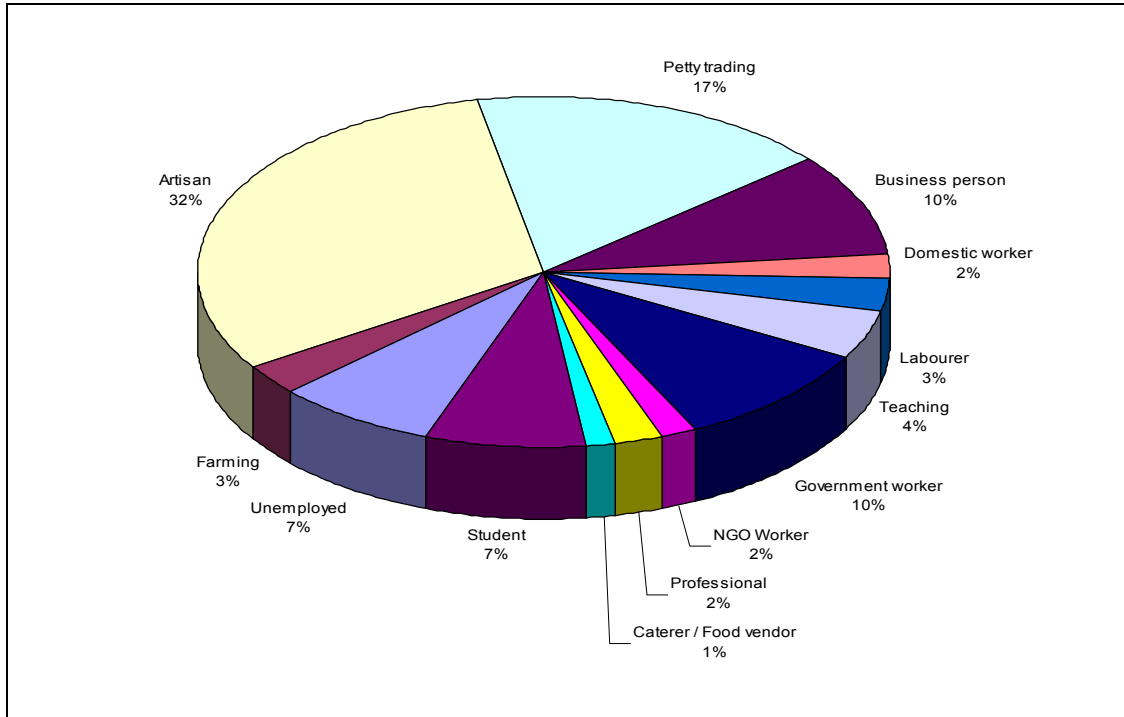
Due to the current socio-economic environment in Ghana, employment is not readily available in the formal sector of urban areas. It is of interested to note that in spite of this situation, people who migrate to the urban areas have continued to do so even when

hopes of getting “white” or “blue” collar jobs seem non-existent. The explanation lies in the expanding urban informal sector which represents a significant pull factor. For example, the survey results show that it is not only the hope of finding jobs in the formal sector that pulls Abutia migrants to the urban areas, but also the expectation of venturing into an economic activity in the informal sector.

Access to formal employment is mediated by rules and regulations, which often have a strong gender bias. As a result young women do not have the same opportunities as young men to find employment in government and private sector offices where high educational qualification is necessary (Potts, 2004). Thus the availability of job opportunities at the migrant’s destination, whether perceived or actual, plays a very important role with regard to the migration decision of households.<sup>211</sup> The distribution of migrants according to their occupation at the destination is shown in Figure 8.3.

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<sup>211</sup>This is what the “over-urbanization” theory of Hoselitz (1957) asserts, that migrants supply far more labour than the formal sector can absorb. Surplus labour, the author contends, is absorbed into the informal sector, which then leads to low productivity and limited prospects for poor migrants. Thus, contrary to conventional wisdom on urbanization and migration, high rates of migration (permanent and temporary) in urbanized areas have continued, despite rising levels of formal unemployment and persistent urban poverty.

**Figure 8.3: Occupation of Migrants at Destination**

Source: Survey Data (2006)

Migrants engage in a great variety of employment activities in the urban areas. These activities, however, depend on their skills, educational attainment, and social networks in the form of other migrants and relatives who will recommend them for employment. The research findings show that 87% of migrants from the households surveyed at Abutia are employed at their destination; 7% are students at various levels of education; whilst a minor 7% are unemployed. The disaggregation of the results by gender shows that 94% of males were employed at their destination, compared to 67% of females. This difference could be attributed to the position of some women as homemakers or housewives. It is of interest to observe in Figure 8.3 that in the informal sector, petty trading, artisan work, domestic worker are some of the occupations that absorbed most of the migrants. This is because these two categories of work require low capital outlay

and minimum skills. Learning to become an artisan is a relatively less expensive form of learning a trade or skill as compared to attending secondary school or a tertiary institution. As a result of the poverty of households in Abutia, most people send their wards to learn a trade and become an artisan such as a carpenter, mason or seamstress.

The informal sector, it can be seen, is capable of absorbing a large proportion of workers, thus corroborating again the importance of the sector as a source of employment in Ghana. Informal economic opportunities may be particularly beneficial to historically disadvantaged groups such as women (Mikell, 1997). For example, petty trading, demand in the entertainment industry from local bars and restaurants, to international tourist resorts, is heavily gender-specific. However, there is a social stigma often attached to some of these jobs, which influences the reputation of women, albeit unfairly. In spite of this drawback, there is also compelling evidence that migrants have escaped extreme poverty when they have remained in the informal sector.

A comparison between the employment rate of migrants before and after migration reveals that the proportion of the unemployed after migration is far less than it was prior to migration. This situation points to an apparent existence of more job opportunities in the cities (Mikell, 1997). In addition, urban areas offer many economic opportunities to rural people for changing jobs and becoming upwardly mobile, even with a low asset base and few skills. Even if urban wages are not higher, work seems to be available more regularly than in subsistence agriculture. Hence, although rural-urban migration

requires more capital and contacts, a general advantage is that work can be found all year round, independent of the season.

## **8.9 Migrant Contact with Household**

An important facet of migration is the rural-urban continuum. Migration is not just about movement, but also about the inter-connectedness between the rural sending areas and the place of destination. Andersson (2002) argues that contrary to popular belief, most migrants do not simply become urban dwellers and permanently sever ties with their rural origins. The author argues that although in the process of moving between villages and cities individuals develop new social relationships, old ones are seldom dissolved. Rather they are merely altered. Anarfi et al. (2001) assert that over the last two decades in particular, there has been a gradual blurring of the distinction between urban and rural areas, as a result of increased mobility of people, goods, services, capital and ideas.

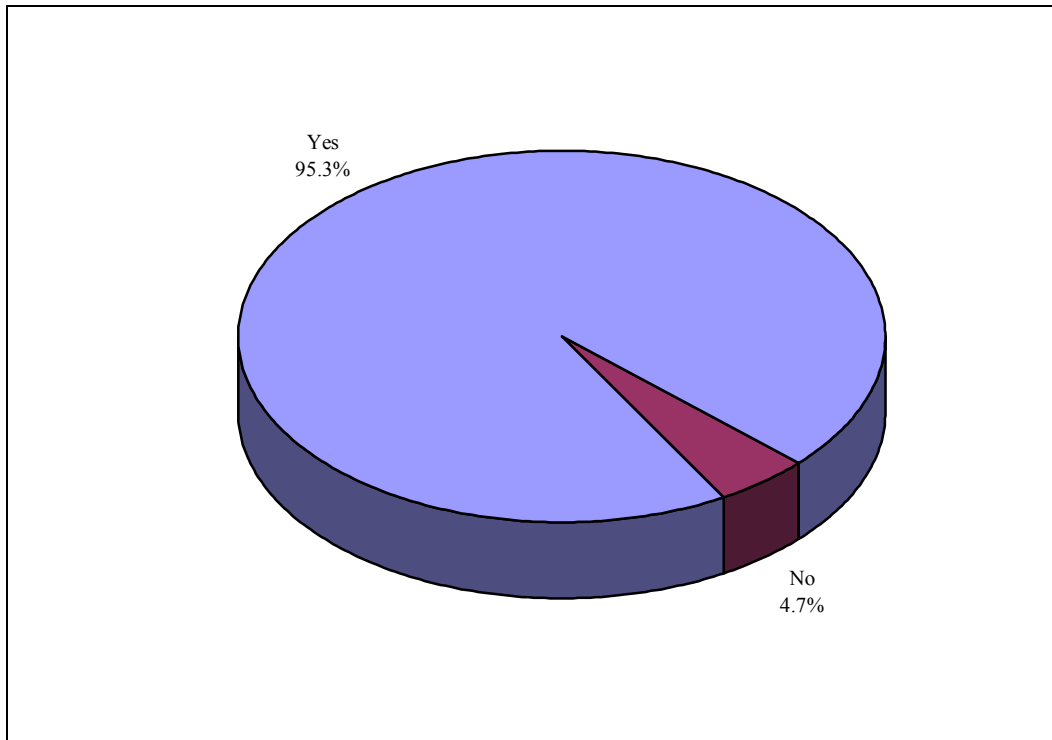
The continual communication between most migrants and sending households suggests very close ties between migrants and the rural households (Chant & Radcliffe, 1992). According to heads of households, most migrants maintain close links with their rural home areas. The importance of linkages is again evidenced in this study where respondents affirmed that migrants living in Accra continue to regard themselves as “Abutia people” and see themselves as still part of their original households.<sup>212</sup> The study showed that 95% of migrants maintain contact with members of their households. A

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<sup>212</sup>It was evident that the system of land tenure in Abutia encourages strong links to rural areas because a migrant cannot sell his land rights in order to have some initial income with which to start a new life in the city.

further disaggregation by gender shows that 89% of female migrants maintain contact with their families, compared to 75% of male migrants. Some migrants provide financial support to their families through remittances, some of which they invest in agriculture.

**Figure 8.4:** *Migrant Contact with Household*



Source: Survey Data (2006)

Most migrants make frequent visits to Abutia for important functions. The study shows that more than 90% of migrants visit home to attend funerals of relatives and friends, while others travel home for religious services, holidays or simply to spend time with families. Out of this percentage, 85% are women and 74% are men. The study found that rural-urban connections in Abutia also guarantee a few migrants a place to “rest” and be fed in-between jobs, while the new young generations are investing in farms. Thus



for many migrants, strong linkages with home areas are not only an essential part of their social identity, but also a way to spread their assets across space (Potts, 1997).<sup>213</sup>

Abutia migrants' maintenance of close ties with their home communities has been strengthened by modern communication particularly transport, that is the first class road between Accra and Ho, and limited postal and telephone links in the district (Beauchemin et al., 2004). Metaphors about “threads, bridges, chains, remittance, anchors and umbilical cords” used in the local language, were employed by respondents to emphasize the interconnectedness between migrants and members of their rural households. These linkages reflect the immense social and economic importance of family and kinship networks in underpinning and shaping the migration process.

## **8.10 Destination of Migrants**

There is much information within Ghana showing that people continue to migrate from the less developed rural areas to the more developed urban centers of the larger towns and cities. Besides economic motivations due to wage differentials, the disproportionate opportunities for welfare and development in cities like Accra, Tema, Kumasi, Secondi-Takoradi and Cape Coast have made them relatively more attractive (GSS, 2000b).

Table 8.2 shows migrants preferred destinations.

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<sup>213</sup>Upon retirement, a few migrants, mainly civil servants, return to the village because they consider life in the village cheaper and more pleasant. This was the migration history of three retirees who had spent their adult lives working as civil servants in various parts of Ghana.

**Table 8.3: Regional Destinations of Migrants**

Region	Percent
Greater Accra	67.5
Volta (other towns)	15.8
Ashanti	3.8
Eastern	2.1
Western	1.7
Central	0.8
Northern	1.3
Upper East	1.7
Abroad	5.4
Total	100

Survey Data (2006)

Our research findings show that the Greater Accra region is the preferred destination for an overwhelming majority of the migrants from the households surveyed in Abutia. It is observed that migrants from a particular origin tend to migrate in a cluster or group to some specific destinations. For example, it was found that out of the 479 people who have migrated from Abutia 68% of them move to Accra, the national capital, with 16% moving to bigger towns within the Volta region, and 4% moving to Ashanti region during the farming season. Migration outside the frontiers of Ghana accounts for less than 1%. Gender disaggregation of data for migrants in Accra shows that 56% of the migrants are males, whilst 44% are females.

The preference for Accra as an urban destination for most migrants could be attributed to the fact that opportunities for employment and facilities for modern living are more concentrated in very few localities within Accra. There are, however, also slum areas such as Ashiaman, where some of the migrants prefer to live as a result of relatively lower rents. However, for most migrants, living in those slum areas is better than

remaining in the village (Asiedu, 2003). Apart from the socio-economic development of Accra, the Greater Accra region also has the bulk of manufacturing industries. It is also the headquarters of most multi-national companies and government institutions, embassies, ports and educational institutions and, therefore, necessitating movements into the region mainly for employment reasons, supplemented by the availability of infrastructure and other factors.

Another reason for the high in-migration into the Greater Accra region might be that a small fraction of these migrants may actually be in a step-migration, in transit to foreign countries. Thus, the greater Accra region could also be said to serve a springboard for potential international migrants. People do not migrate blindly and tend to rely on initial social networks such as a friend, kinsman or a member of the same religion for initial accommodation in town, before they eventually find work in either the formal or informal sector and become independent (Findley, 1995).

### **8.11 Abutia Migrants in Accra**

An important feature of the Ghanaian social system is community identity. As such migrants tend to form “home town” associations in their places of destination for identity and social support, and Abutia migrants are not an exception to this phenomenon. There is a large Abutia association in Accra, whose memberships consists of people from the three indigenous Abutia villages. The association is a well-organized group that meets on the third Sunday of each month to discuss various issues pertaining to the welfare of

migrants and their families. They offer various forms of support to the membership, which include support to new migrants during their search for jobs, and support for “older” migrants in times of crises. The members pay association dues that are used to assist others in the event of crisis, such as payment of unforeseen emergency hospital bills. They also support each other during bereavement and most importantly, contribute towards the development of their villages. Members of the Abutia association were interviewed in order to collect data to complete the migrant data, which was received by proxy through heads of households.

In order to obtain information from the migrants’ perspective to complement data from the villages, we attended one of the association’s monthly meetings in Accra, and conducted informal semi-structured interviews among male and female migrants. Interviews with the membership revealed that the majority of migrants, both men and women, came to Accra with the main purpose of finding employment. A smaller percentage came to continue their education, found jobs after completion of their studies and remained in the city. The research team observed that the number of men in the association was higher than that of women. Discussions with the leaders revealed that most female members were too busy with household duties and could not attend the meetings. This notwithstanding, it was acknowledged that there were also more male migrants than female migrants. When interviewed about the determinants and motivations for migration from Abutia, they gave a number of reasons, such as employment and education, details of which are discussed below.

### 8.11.1 Job-Seeking Migration

More than half of the migrants interviewed indicated that they migrated to Accra in order to find employment. The main reason they gave was the comparative easiness in finding jobs, particularly within the informal sector. In the migrants' accounts, employment in farm and non-farm sectors in the rural areas, and even in Ho, the district capital, is by far less attractive in terms of income, than employment in Accra. They explained that even if they found jobs in the Volta region, the relatively low compensation would make it impossible for them to meet their financial responsibilities such as the payment of school fees, buying uniforms for their children and meeting emergency health expenses.

The migrants were also interviewed regarding their experiences pertaining to job search in Accra. According to respondents, prior to migration, they had very high hopes of finding jobs easily. They admitted that the search for good jobs proved to be difficult after migration. While about 37% of the migrants interviewed said they found it easy to get jobs, the other 53% thought it was more difficult than they had envisaged. This implies that for a new-comer to the city, the process of job search can be painful and very lengthy. Migrants who have lived in Accra for more than a decade admitted that it was a lot easier to find jobs when they migrated to the city years ago. Most of these migrants, both men and women, were employed predominantly in the informal sector.<sup>214</sup> They

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<sup>214</sup>This research finding confirms a previous study done by *Voices of the Poor* on Ghana. Findings from that study show that the unemployed from rural areas feel they have no choice but to leave home in search of work. According to the study, these migrants move because they believe that the successful generation of remittances is likely to make the difference between food security and a lack of it for themselves and their families.

emphasized the fact that even though most jobs are in the informal sector, they are relatively better paying, compared to seasonal agricultural work in the villages. The information received from the migrants confirmed the data we collected from heads of households in Abutia.

While there are enough success stories to encourage migration, it is usually hope, not reality that attracts migrants. Once they arrive in the city, they remain, surviving initially on care packages from rural relatives. Our study revealed that informally transferring food into the urban areas is an important way of coping. More than half of the migrants indicated that they received significant amounts of staple grains, wild meat and vegetables from rural relatives. They also said that the food was important to their initial survival in the city. Some unemployed migrants were adamant in staying in the city even if they did not get any job.

#### 8.11.2 Education Seeking Migrants

With the spread of migration, Accra is well-known to most villagers for its educational institutions. The common pattern for migrants in search of education is to contact relatives, friends or acquaintances in Accra. About half of the migrants present at the meeting explained that the initial reason they migrated to Accra was due to the lack of tertiary educational facilities in the area. These were younger migrants at the time of migration, and easily adjusted to their new life style, and took advantage of better educational opportunities in the city. In addition, they lived with their parents or other

relatives and thus received family support. About two thirds of the migrants attained primary education, with half of them entering apprenticeships. Another half had received secondary school certificate, with a minority going on to university and polytechnic. Those who moved to Accra for their studies said they remained there because they had made contacts within the city, which improved their access to a job. For example Mr. V, one of our contact persons, left Abutia to attend Secondary School in Accra. He later obtained his University degree, and subsequently found a job and has remained.

### 8.11.3 Migrants Moving for Family Reasons

Some of the migrants indicated that they moved to Accra for family reasons. This is mainly because when the head of the family unit moves, the rest of the family normally moves to join him at a later stage. The majority of these people were either heads of family units, children or relatives of the family head. A small percentage of those present at the meeting indicated that they had no particular reason for moving to Accra, but did so because that was the trend. Some members of this small group of migrants did not have any marketable skills to enable them find decent jobs.

Another group of migrants who moved for family reasons are relatively old, and have little or no education, and were having cultural adjustment problems due to the dramatic change in lifestyle. They had families in the villages but could not remit them because they were unemployed. Surprisingly, in spite of their circumstances, they also insisted

that it was better to remain in the city and find odd jobs as street hawkers rather than to return to agricultural work in Abutia where they will be looked upon as social failures.

### **8.12 Migrant Contact with Families**

We also interviewed migrants regarding contact with their families, as well as their involvement in social activities in the villages. Our discussions with the migrants once again established the facts obtained from heads of households, confirming that most migrants keep close contacts with their home villages. The migrants indicated that they participate considerably in social activities, not only in their home villages, but also in the adjoining villages. The majority indicated that they attend social ceremonies, such as funerals, and often participated in the organization and financing of such occasions.

It was evident from our discussions that the respondents took a keen interest in the development of their villages, to the extent that they attended meetings in the villages occasionally, and provided financial support towards community development projects. Examples of migrants' financial support include the purchase of electricity poles, payment for the connection of street lights, and assisting with construction of the school and day care centre in Kloe, as well as the public toilets in Kloe and Teti. The findings also corroborate research conducted nearly four decades ago by Little (1965), in which the author observed that origin-based associations among migrants in major cities contribute immensely to the development of their places of origin.



### **8.13 Conclusion**

This chapter presents a theoretical argument that migration is best understood as a series of relationships between socio-cultural and economic factors and gender. These relationships reflect the normative guidelines by which societies organize. Gender, the social meaning assigned to sex, is a universal aspect of the Ghanaian society, accounting for how it shapes social reality and human behaviour, and migration patterns within the country. The study shows that rural-urban migration occurs on a relatively large scale in the Abutia village communities. The extent and nature of this migration varied according to differences in the pull-push factors. Findings from our research indicate a predominantly large male migration, which is occurring concurrently with a smaller but relatively increasing migration of females from Abutia. More men than women have left these rural areas, creating imbalances in sex-ratios, particularly of working age groups. This has left women with a greater responsibility for the support of their children and older relatives, a situation that warrants further investigation, and is analysed more comprehensively in the next chapter.

## CHAPTER 9

### IMPACT OF MIGRATION ON RURAL HOUSEHOLDS

“There are no jobs in the village and we do not have money. Honestly that is the situation in all our three Abutia villages. Because of this situation most of our young men move to the cities. Some of them are able to go to “higher schools” and find good jobs. These ones are able to send money to help their families in the village. Meanwhile some of the young men who go to the cities end up on the streets doing bad things. Some do not even have a place to “lay their heads.” Others become sick and are brought back here to the village to die. When this happens they become the burden of the women in the family. The man’s wife, mother, sister or daughter has to take care of him. Even though we are poor we cannot leave a family member on the street. People will not respect your family if they do that. You bring the person home. “If you eat stone he will also eat stone.” Yes that is how it is in the village. So what I am saying is that when people leave the village sometimes it is good and sometimes it is bad especially for the women.....” <sup>215</sup>

#### 9.1 Introduction

This chapter analyzes the consequences of migration on rural households, with a focus on its impact on the livelihood and household responsibilities of women. The main issue the chapter discusses is what happens when male migration occurs within a household, and leaves women without a husband or significant male member. An earlier discussion on the status of Ghanaian women shows that rural women are seriously disadvantaged in

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<sup>215</sup>Ms.E. (Wife of migrant interviewed as Key Informant through survey questionnaire open-ended questions at Abutia Teti on December 14th, 2005).

every sector of the economy. This is largely attributed to structures entrenched in the Ghanaian socio-cultural and political system, which discriminates against women (Bukh, 1979; Manuh, 1997).<sup>216</sup> The situation of rural women in Ghana becomes even more noticeable when men migrate. The impact of migration on women's livelihood is systemic, with far-reaching implications for the daily lives of these rural women (Bridge, 2001). The most noticeable consequences are the creation of an imbalance, which is evident in the societal division of labor, as it compels women to take greater responsibilities and manage heavier workloads. The rest of the chapter presents an analysis of data the implications of rural-urban migration for the Abutia communities.

The data collected represents the perspectives of the local people of Abutia. The perspective of the Abutia people is important to this research because these are issues that affect them. It is their lived reality. The dissertation starts from the premise that there are significant benefits in utilizing local knowledge.<sup>217</sup> First, a better understanding of what local people already know, can help researchers and local people to work together more effectively in implementing projects which have positive development impact (Mikell, 1997). Another important result of studying migration and rural livelihood from the rural people's perspective is that some socio-cultural information on migration and livelihood came to the fore, which would have remained unknown. It was clear from the

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<sup>216</sup> See Chapt 5 for detailed discussion on the socio-econ situation of Ghanaian women.

<sup>217</sup> The study postulates that knowledge is much more than a collection of facts: it relates to the whole system of concepts, beliefs and perceptions that people hold about the world around them. This includes the way people observe and measure what is around them, how they set about solving problems, and how they validate new information.

study that Abutia people are knowledgeable and about rural-urban migration, as well as other development issues that affect them.

## 9.2 Implications for Agriculture

Rural-urban migration has had profound influence on village communities, as more men than women left the rural areas, leaving imbalances in sex-ratios, particularly among working age groups (Caldwell, 1969). In view of the key place that agriculture occupies in the Ghanaian economy and its position as the primary source of livelihood in the Abutia communities, the consequences of rural-urban migration on agriculture is important for the sustainability of agricultural livelihood in the villages.<sup>218</sup> The extend of the impact, however, depends on various factors, including the seasonality of movement, length of time spent away, an ability to maintain labour inputs and to invest productively in agriculture, and the availability of social structures allowing for women to strategize and pursue diverse livelihoods effectively.

Agricultural productivity and growth generally requires increased land and labour input (Mikell, 1997). However, since the Abutia people have vast lands, labour rather than land, is the major production resource constraint (Swindell, 1985). Our research findings showed that 105 heads of the households surveyed stressed labour loss through migration as a key factor accounting for low agricultural output levels. These respondents argued

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<sup>218</sup>An FAO document (1999:12-13) shows that while the proportion of the labor force working in agricultural declined over the 1990s, the proportion of women working in agriculture increased, particularly in developing countries. In some regions such as Africa and Asia, almost half of the labor force is women.

that the absence of men, who have a shared responsibility for agricultural productivity and animal husbandry, has consequently led to a reduction in the available labour force. It has thereby, left agricultural production in the hands of women, the elderly and children, who have less strength than men to undertake strenuous farming activities (Andersson, 2002). The study also shows that women often find it increasingly difficult to adequately offset the labour contributions of their absentee husbands, and as a result they are unable to cultivate large acreages of land. Some women hire farm labour, but the expense of male labour during farm clearing time, and the unwillingness of some men to hire their labour to women, has led to further reduction in women's agricultural productivity (Ardayio-Schandorf and Awumbila, 2000).<sup>219</sup>

It was observed during our stay in the villages that the hoe and cutlass continue to be the major implements of agricultural activities (Nukunya, 1972). This means that farming is labour intensive, and requires even more labour for tasks such as clearing of land and harvesting (Swindell, 1985). Labour shortages in female-headed farm households may often hinder the adoption of new technologies or improved land conservation practices. Meanwhile monetary payment for hired labour also reduces the limited capital available to the female farmers, which could have been invested to increase farm sizes or change technological methods of production. In these circumstances, the absence of able-bodied men is even more keenly felt, and has led to a "labour gap" in agriculture (Murray, 1981). As a result, most women have to work harder and for longer hours on the household's

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<sup>219</sup>Some men believe that it is demeaning to work for a woman and receive payment for it. Particularly since most people are related in one way or another either through marriage or blood, a man receiving payment for work done for kin is considered unacceptable by some people. This gender ideology reduces the male labour available even further.

communal fields, and have less time to work on their own lands and attend to their secondary livelihood (Potts, 2000).

The lack of male labour for clearing thick bush has also led to longer cropping rotations on land, which should have been allowed to fallow after one to three years. This is because of women's inability to undertake this operation with simple hand tools (Murray, 1081). As a result, land fertility and yields have declined over the years and soil erosion has increased. When asked about food security 65% of respondents indicated that household food situation in the villages was inadequate. This finding is supported by a study by Francis (2000) in Botswana, which shows that female-headed households are significantly poorer than other households as women are handicapped in crop cultivation if they do not have a team of oxen, or if they lack the physical strength to handle ploughing oxen. Micro-studies on the gender division of labour and time use in farming systems generally substantiate the fact that rural women in poor households work longer hours than men, and that their responsibility for domestic and agricultural tasks is considerable (Brydon & Chant, 1989).

Another impact of male rural-urban migration on agriculture is the decreasing size and fragmentation of family landholdings. This situation occurs as in the absence of a migrant, landholdings are shared among sons and other male members of the extended family (Nukunya, 1972). Women's weak property rights clearly play their part in such social processes. With a shortage of labour and capital, women heads of households are often forced to make adjustments to cropping patterns and farming systems. This,

coupled with the management of farms by women, has transformed smallholder agriculture into “feminized” agriculture (Bukh, 1979). These adjustments have resulted in decreases in production and, in some cases, shifts towards less nutritious crops such as cassava instead of plantain and vegetables. Not surprisingly, these households often suffer from increased malnutrition and food insecurity (Andersson, 2001). When rural-urban migration occurs, women within female-headed households become farmers in their own right. However, they encounter a variety of production constraints. As more women become the principal supporters of their households, these constraints not only prejudice women’s physical and emotional health, but they also have an impact on household welfare. Migration, may, therefore, place a restriction on intensification and diversification of agriculture (Anh, 2003).

Thus, for rural families primarily engaged in farming, male migration and other factors, which result in labour shortages, are often drastically changing the traditional division of labour on the farms. The net effect of this change is often to increase women's farm workload and lower agricultural productivity because of the shortage of male labour (Afshar, 2003). Migration, therefore, has an inverse relationship with agricultural productivity in the sense that as migration increases, agricultural productivity decreases. As a result of the low productivity in agriculture, women tend to diversify their household income through secondary livelihood strategies. The effectiveness of managing these secondary sources of livelihood, however, also tends to be affected by rural-urban migration (Kasanga & Avis, 1988).

### 9.3 Implications for Secondary Livelihood

The inadequacy of agricultural income has compelled rural women in Abutia to combine agriculture with petty trading and other forms of secondary livelihood in the informal sector.<sup>220</sup> Women engage in trading and small business initiatives to meet changing budgetary responsibilities, to improve income-generation during the lean season, and as a source of investment income to sustain their farms. The kinds of trading and business ventures women establish, the amount of time and financial resources they invest in these livelihoods differ, and may change over time as a result of household responsibilities. Additionally, although in the urban areas income from petty trading often exceeds formal wage earnings, in Abutia women hardly make a living out of petty trading. Having said that, petty trading is still very important as a supplement for the inadequate income that the villagers get from their agricultural activities (Mikell, 1997).

For most women, petty trading has been their response to unfavorable access to land, male out-migration, inadequacy of remittances, unemployment, and other means of improving welfare. About 97% of the women in our study indicated that male-out migration has impacted on their secondary sources of livelihood. They explained that they would have invested more time in these ventures, and thereby made more income for their families if they had received help from male migrants. However, with migration

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<sup>220</sup>Evidence from the literature suggests that petty trading is an important non-farm livelihood strategy, and a significant component of the urban and rural economy in Ghana (Little 1999).



and increased household responsibilities, they spend less time on their secondary livelihood and, therefore, lose income.

Abutia women have diverse experiences with petty trading and small businesses, depending on the means and opportunities available to each woman at any given time (Nabila, 1986). Among the women interviewed, we found that most of them were engaged in one or more supplementary off-farm income-earning activity in conjunction with farming. The study showed that more than 84% households have actually been involved in petty trading as a secondary form of livelihood by selling one item or a multiple of items for many years. These trading activities are undertaken predominantly by women and include the sale of farm products, free range poultry farm products, and essential commodities such as soap, milk, sugar and milk. Some of the items are sold on table-tops, but there are a few kiosks and stores in the three villages.<sup>221</sup> A few of the smaller stores in the villages are also operated by women, while the relatively better stocked stores are owned by men. About two women operate a local restaurant called a “chop bar” that sells *fufu* with soup, while others simply sell cooked food such as rice with stew on table tops in the open area.

There is a marked gender differentiation in the ownership of shops, so that twice as many men as women own them. Although some women operate the stores, they do not necessarily own them. About 50% of these stores were built by migrants in Accra for

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<sup>221</sup>Kiosks are movable small wooden structures with shelves that serve as mini stores. They are usually painted with bright colours and have names or sayings that depict the values or experience of the owner or operator. For example “*Mawuena*” meaning “God will provide.”

their spouses or other female relatives (Asiedu, 2003). Most women attributed the gender differentiation of store ownership to the fact that they spend most of their money on their households. Respondents could not indicate the average weekly income they get from trading. However, it was obvious that in contrast to the women selling items on table tops, those selling cooked food and drinks earn better average incomes. The trading activities that women initiate in Abutia are, therefore, those which can generate a moderate income on a daily basis, with little front-end investment (Mikell, 1997).

While enabling them to purchase food, clothing and household necessities and pay for children's school fees and medical care, women's farms and supplementary business initiatives afford a chance to explore new livelihood options, and provide a stronger sense of personal autonomy, as evidenced by the introductory quotation of the dissertation. Maintaining flexibility and adaptability in farming, trading and small business activities and routines is an essential coping strategy. This is due to women's multiple and changing roles and obligations both inside and outside of the household.<sup>222</sup>

“My small trade in milk, sugar and other small items slows down just before the rains come, because I have to spend more time preparing the land for planting. My older sons help, but they are in school and can only go to the farm on Saturdays. After clearing the land, I spend more time trading and wait for the rain. When the rains come then I have to plant the crops. It is only after planting the crops that I spend more time again on the trading. Soon it will be time to weed between the crops, and trading slows again and picks up after the weeding, until harvest time. What can I do? With my husband away and the male relatives also farming for their families, there is no help. I have learned

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<sup>222</sup>The reinvestment of agricultural earnings into multiple short-term non-agricultural pursuits constitutes a critical livelihoods strategy in the presence of economic uncertainty in SSA (Carney et al., 1999).

to divide my time between farming, trading and taking care of the home. I have to be flexible to be able to cope with all the work”.<sup>223</sup>

Although personal circumstances and socio-cultural structures have placed Abutia women in a position whereby they are increasingly responsible for the day-to-day survival and well-being of their households, these women still look towards the future, and plan for their lives, as well as that of their families.<sup>224</sup>

It is evident from our discussions that gender relations underpin work and life in Abutia. Men and women have different assets, access to resources, and opportunities. Abutia women rarely own land, and have lower educational levels due to discriminatory access to education as girl-children.<sup>225</sup> Additionally, their access to productive resources as well as decision-making tends to occur through the mediation of men (Hill, 1978). Women’s farming and small business ventures, therefore, reflect more than the need for cash income. These strategies are part of their long-term goals to cope with personal and household vulnerability.

In conclusion, it is clear from our research findings, that male migration from Abutia affects both primary and secondary sources of livelihood of households, especially women. As a result, women are compelled to make changes in their personal and household life-cycle circumstances over time in order to cope with the impact of rural-

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<sup>223</sup> Interview with Delali, wife of a migrant in Abutia Agorve, February 2006.

<sup>224</sup> Some of the women in the three villages complained that migration was affecting their ability to generate adequate incomes to cater for their families. They indicated that petty trading is also not profitable. Thus although they work very hard, many of them remained poor.

<sup>225</sup> See detailed discussions in Chapters 5 and 7.

urban migration. Our study portrays a delicate balancing act, as women succeed to varying degrees, in cobbling together livelihoods somewhere in the spectrum between farm and non-farm, family and individual, and rural and urban contrasts. The chapter now turns to a discussion on migrant remittances, as these also have important implications for households in the research communities.

#### **9.4 Remittance Behaviour of Migrants**

Migrant remittances can be a valuable source of income and livelihood for households, and can also serve as a means of risk diversification. These remittances can significantly facilitate the purchase of consumer goods, and in some cases, increase household savings. This may in turn alter the local household income distribution. A review of the literature shows that migration helps reduce the level of poverty, even though in many cases it does not radically improve living conditions. Afshar (2003) argues that migration has reduced poverty directly and indirectly in Bangladesh, as remittances have expanded the area under agricultural cultivation. Similarly, two studies by Guest (1998) in Thailand show that remittances are an important supplement to household income, and have a multiplier effect on the economy, with many major items of expenditure such as construction materials and labour being obtained locally. However, male rural-urban migration does not always lead to more migrant income for agricultural households, as is the case in Ghana.

In Ghana, international remittances are an important source of income diversification, and it is general knowledge that families with migrant workers, particularly those in developed countries, have a higher standard of living than non-migrant households.<sup>226</sup> Additionally, these households are better able to withstand shocks to income and threats to welfare than non-migrant households (GLSS, 2002b). Meanwhile, less known and yet potentially significant, is the impact of internal remittances, which is those funds sent home by migrants who have moved from rural areas to the urban centers. Such remittances, although relatively small, can consist of a considerable portion of the household income, and be of great significance to a rural family. Given the fact that the number of internal migrants worldwide is much higher than that of international migrants, the returns of these kinds of remittances in terms of poverty reduction are substantial, even though wage differentials are not as significant domestically as they are internationally (UN, 2005).<sup>227</sup> The impact of internal remittances on a household in Abutia, for instance, is captured in the dialogue below:

**Papa Yaw:** Welcome.

**Papa Kordzo:**

Good evening. Are you well, is your household well? I returned from the farm a short while ago, and decided to come and visit you while my wife prepares the evening meal.

**Papa Yaw:**

We are all doing very well by the grace of God. You know He is the only one keeping us.

**Papa Kordzo:**

Very well spoken. Where would we be without God? That is why we have to be thankful for each day. That is a beautiful and loud radio you

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<sup>226</sup>It has been argued that international migrant remittances are becoming a potential source of external finance, and its magnitude has exceeded the amount of Overseas Development Assistance (ODA) in Ghana (GLSS, 2002).

<sup>227</sup> In Morocco, for instance, remittances from urban to rural areas are estimated to account for as much as 30% of the income of the poor (Adepoju, 1986).

have. It must be new because I don't remember seeing it on my last visit.

**Papa Yaw:**

Yes, you are right. You remember my son Kwame who left for the city a few years ago?

**Papa Kordzo:**

Of course I remember Kwame. He left after attending the high level school in the village to join his sister in Accra, right?

**Papa Yaw:**

Right. He completed a higher school in Accra, and has now got a good job by the grace of God. He bought me the radio when he received his first salary. He also promises to send his mother and myself some money every two months. I am very glad that I spent money sending him to school and not his sisters as his mother wanted. Now see the profit? Sons always bring us more profit than daughters.

**Papa Kordzo:**

Yes sometimes as men we have to be firm and keep our own counsel and not listen to these women. But how about his sister?

**Papa Yaw:**

Well, she is also in Accra there trading in one thing or another. You remember she married Mr. Ofori's son. Now they have four children. He works and she is trading. But with four children and a husband, what can we expect from her? She sends money whenever she can, but it is nothing compared to what her younger brother is able to do. How about your two sons in the city?

**Papa Kordzo:**

My sons are doing well. They also send us money regularly. They alternate, so that each person sends money every two months. The money we receive is very helpful, since our income from farming is not enough for the family, especially when the rains fail.

**Papa Yaw:**

So true. That is very good. I think we are some of the lucky families in the village. And the envy of many people (he whispers). Now let us go and drink to our children. Kwame brought some good white man's hot drink. Let's have some to drink before you go home for your evening meal.

**Papa Kordzo:** Amen to that.<sup>228</sup>

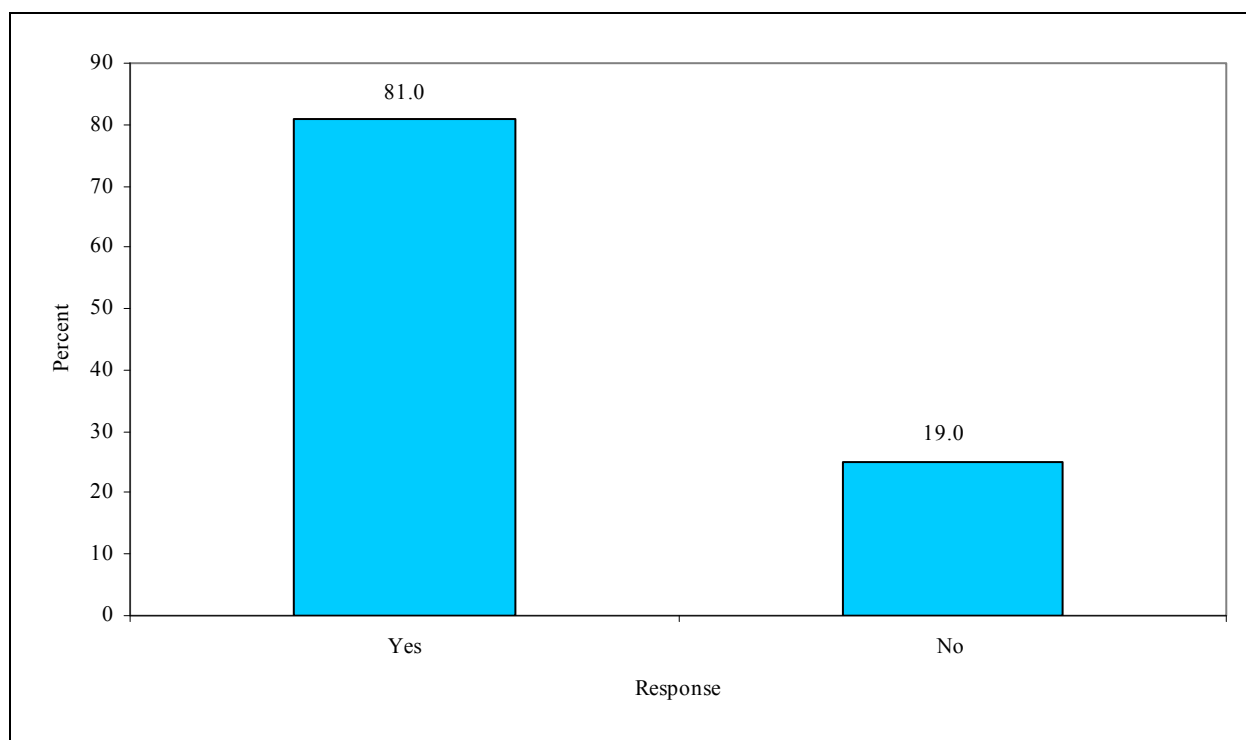
The research findings show that in the Abutia villages, migrants' remittances are probably the most essential source of family cash, which is sometimes higher than

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<sup>228</sup>This dialogue was recorded in my research journal during participant observation in Abutia Kloe in January 2006. The title Papa is used either for one's biological father, or as a respectable title for any elderly male who may be in the same age range as your father.

agricultural income. The magnitude of remittances is reflected in the fact that an overwhelming number of 98 out of the 107 households surveyed indicated that they receive remittances, whilst only 9 heads of households stated that they do not receive any remittances from migrants.<sup>229</sup> Remittances in the research areas, however, are generally low. Some households receive as little as ₪100,000.00 throughout the year, and others receive up to ₪36,000,000.00. The average annual remittance within the area is 1.8 million cedis (\$200USD).<sup>230</sup> It is worth noting that almost two-thirds of the household receive less than ₪1,000,000.00 (\$110USD) a year.

**Figure 9.1: Percentage of households receiving remittances**



Source: Survey Data (2006)

<sup>229</sup>It was observed during the interviews that heads of households only count money as remittances, and gifts and other tangible forms of transfers are not considered as remittances.

<sup>230</sup>These figures are calculated at the 2004 exchange rate.

Most of the remittances are sent on either a monthly or bi-monthly basis to the households. The study results show that on average Abutia men remit more than women. This differential is attributed to the fact that male migrants tend to be better educated than female migrants, and therefore, tend to find employment in the formal sector where the salaries are higher and regular. Most female migrants on the other hand, enter the informal sector and even though there are opportunities for high profits they are unable to achieve this due to lack of capital.

Even though the amount of remittances is generally low and sometimes infrequent, they are important for food security and reducing household poverty and vulnerability. In a much earlier study of internal migration in Ghana, Caldwell (1969) found that migrants sent remittances to pay for schooling and wages of farm labourers and to develop small businesses. In a more recent study conducted by the Sussex Centre for Migration Research in Ghana, to explore the remittance behaviour of migrant households in the Ashanti region, the study identified three main uses to which remittance flows are applied. According to the survey, first, remittances are used to satisfy individual consumption needs, organizing funerals and meeting other pressing social needs. Secondly, it is used to support social projects in migrants' originating communities. And lastly, remittances are used for productive investments.

The findings of my study, on the other hand, show that the beneficiaries of remittances in the Abutia households surveyed spend the remittances mostly on daily needs including food, which improves food security and nutritional status; medical expenses or education



which can improve the livelihood prospects of future generations; leasing land or livestock, hiring of farm labour, and the purchase of cash inputs for agriculture, which results in better cultivation practices and higher yields; remittances are also spent on other livelihood strategies such as petty trading. A smaller amount goes to residential repair and maintenance. We observed that in spite of remittances, households could not afford consumer durables such as stereos, bicycles, radios and milling machine. Hence in the case of Abutia, the investment of remittances in productive uses is limited, and consumption spending is greater. This situation, however, is not necessarily a negative, as consumption includes a variety of uses, which have positive effects on well-being of the villagers.

The study also found that in return for the financial support extended to their household members in the rural areas, migrants received support “in-kind.” In a form of unspoken reciprocity, the majority of households (68%) provide assistance to migrants either through friends and family traveling to the cities, or when migrants visit home. The assistance consists of the following: 86% are food stuffs from the farm; 9% are prepared and packaged food items; 2% are livestock raised in the villages; and 4% provide money to migrants who are students on a return visit during the holidays. Parents working long hours in the urban informal sector also tend to send their children to live with their relatives in the home villages. In exchange for help from relatives, some migrants who are relatively well-settled in the urban areas also support newly-arrived migrants and secondary and tertiary school students from their extended families.

Findings from our research suggest that remittances make a strong contribution to reducing economic vulnerability at least at the household and local community level in Abutia. It is obvious that the sustenance of these households might have been difficult without remittances. It is important to emphasize that much of the effects are only seen at the household level, suggesting that remittances underpin the welfare of these households. From a macro-perspective, it can be said that remittances contribute to the equalization of the income distribution among households having out-migrants. However, as much as it is important to assess the impact of remittance flow at the national level, it is even more important to consider an assessment of the gendered impact at the household level.

## **9.5 Demographic Implications**

As indicated earlier in the thesis, the most noticeable socio-cultural impact of male out-migration from Abutia is an increasing incidence of female-headed households among the households surveyed. The literature reveals that female-headed households seem to be a major demographic trend in Ghana, as the national rate for 2003 was 40% for urban areas, and 39% for rural areas (GDHS, 2003). The causes for this demographic trend, however, differ for urban and rural areas. While the cause for female-headed households in rural areas may be due mainly to migration, in the urban areas, it is mainly divorce.<sup>231</sup>

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<sup>231</sup>See Brydon and Chant (1989) Chapt 4 for further discussion of the household.

That migration is the major contributor to female-headed households in rural areas, is evidenced by the results of our study, in which 65 out of the 107 households surveyed were female-headed households. A consequent effect of female-headed households is that most households are composed mainly of women, children and the elderly. This in turn results in a high dependency ratio in these households, as a result of age and sex selectivity of migration. As indicated earlier, women in rural areas have limited access to resources such as land and capital. It follows that the high dependency ratio in female-headed households will make it even more difficult for the woman to mobilize adequate resources. As a result, these female-headed households tend to be the most vulnerable among the rural poor in Abutia, due to seasonal stressors from their inability to secure needed labour during the farming season. Lastly, migrants still control decision-making through directives sent, and remittances that are sent through male members of the household. Due to this control by proxy, women do not have the autonomy to make major decisions in the family. Male out-migration, therefore, conserves the traditional kinship relations and patriarchal values, thus reinforcing gender asymmetries within the household.

## **9.6 Implications for Household Division of Labour**

Our research findings show that the changing role of women is also one of the most notable socio-cultural effects of migration in Abutia.<sup>232</sup> As men migrate, women are compelled to assume an increasing responsibility as heads of households. This situation

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<sup>232</sup>Socio-cultural implications of rural-urban migration relate to its effect on the structure and cohesiveness of the family, and these implications have gender perspectives.

fundamentally changes the gender division of labour in a farm household by increasing the burden of work on women. For women, this translates into a marked increase in agricultural work, including a wider range of farm tasks, a heavier domestic workload and childcare, and less time for pursuing their economic livelihood (Brydon & Chant, 1989). Paradoxically, the study also found that even in the few households where there are non-migrant men, the men in the household do not assume domestic tasks, even though women have proportionately more on-farm and off-farm productive activities.

Findings from our research further show that almost 90% of the male research participants acknowledged an increased involvement of women in both household and farming activities. Most respondents indicated that changing roles and responsibilities of women in the household could be attributed to women taking over farm tasks that used to be performed by male heads of family units and households. Furthermore, others observed that out-migration of men and working-age youths from the research area, transfers workloads from women to girl children, who may be pulled out of school to assist their mothers. This has important repercussions on their educational attainment.

## **9.7 Effect on Household Decision-Making**

Another consequence of rural-urban migration on households found in our research is the increase in “tied” decision-making of women. An examination of the data within the context of Abutia shows that the decision-making of women within households has increased to various degrees, but within a rather limited range. During the interviews, 38

respondents in the households surveyed indicated that decision making of women has increased; 40 others argued that it is rather the decision making of migrants that has increased; 25 stated that the decision-making of male relatives has increased; while 55 argued that the decision making of women has not increased at all. Meanwhile more than 72 of the respondents stated that migrants are consulted on all major decisions, while 45 said that major decisions are usually made by the eldest male relatives in the household.

It was clear that in Abutia households, women only make minor decisions. They have to consult with either male household heads, a significant male member of the household, or the migrant, before making any major decision. Thus, some male migrants still make use of their position as head of the family unit or household by proxy. This is because most migrants give control to their male relatives, and send remittances through them, asking them to act on their behalf. Some women argued that they have been put in a difficult position of having to deal with the migrant, as well as male members of the migrant's family. Some male household heads were much more concerned with the impact of migration on family values, and found the issue of women's decision-making to be rather trivial.

### 9.7.1 Traditional Values and Control

Migration can be considered an agent of change for a migrant's value system, mainly because the process exposes the individual to a new environment, and to new ideas (Gramsci, 1971). When people migrate from the rural areas to the cities, the migratory

process is likely to change the ways some migrants identify with their communities, and the importance that they place on some family values, relative to its significance in their lives. In our study communities, some research participants, especially the elderly, opined that rural-urban migration has facilitated a breakdown of the traditional controls used by the family. Others stated that it had resulted in changes in the lifestyles of the migrants. A few of the respondents, especially the elderly, talked about the “negative and unwanted city lifestyle” adopted by some migrants, which they termed “socially dysfunctional,” arguing that it is a problem that is surfacing in the villages. Others argued that the youth are blindly copying American pop culture, which consider as wrong and “downright disgusting.” Some respondents stated that the freedom enjoyed by migrants in the cities, allows them to cut ties with relations with whom they so desired without recourse to traditional family controls. For instance if a misunderstanding occurs between a parent and migrant, the migrant may simply cut off contact without seeking the intervention of the head of household to resolve the issue, as is the social norm.

Some respondents asserted that migrants, both men and women, are becoming “too outspoken” and “rude,” and questioning the actions of local community leadership in the villages. This is an action that one man referred to as a “total abomination.” Other participants expressed concern that children and adolescents living in the cities may have a higher susceptibility of being exposed to undesirable moral and degenerate surroundings, which will invariably adulterate their good cultural values. A small number of respondents indicated that out-migration has not resulted in any negative changes in the values of migrants. Although some participants expressed their concern

regarding the negative effect of migration on cultural values, yet they supported the process because, as they aptly summed it up, “the benefits outweigh the disadvantages.”

An analysis of the situation in Abutia showed that “changes” that are seen to occur in an individual during migration, are part of the “urbanization” process. Upon migrating to the cities, migrants tend to adjust their habits and belief systems to that of the cities, if not immediately, then at least over a few years. These changes, which are considered “urbanization” of the migrant, form part of an expected transformation during migration. This process includes changes in the migrant’s perception of life, cultural values, relationship within the family, developing a new circle of friends, changes in clothing.

The changes that occur in migrants are not necessarily negative, as they are seen as an improvement, or “refinement.” However, critics of rural-urban migration often assume that migrants give up the good values of their “good old rural culture” and adopt the bad features of city life. This appears to be quite an illogical assumption because as rational humans, when presented with new choices, it seems more likely that most people would adopt good features and reject the bad ones, rather than vice versa. Change in general, allows some choices, which a small, stable, and static rural community does not. The findings also reveal that in spite of these “urbanization” changes, many migrants maintain the importance attached to most significant cultural values and ceremonies, such as church and funerals, and visit home out of respect, to attend such functions.<sup>233</sup>

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<sup>233</sup>This transformation could be considered as a remnant of the modernization paradigm where the person from the traditional rural area is expected to “modernize” after living in the city.

It was apparent from the study that exposure to new environments may have an impact, not only on the migrants themselves, but also on the socio-cultural, economic and political climate of both the communities of origin and destination. In line with this, one would expect that migration could change the gender ideologies, as migrants integrate in their destinations, and bring new and improved ideas to the rural areas. Our research findings show that gender socialization remains the same in both areas. This is mainly because gender ideologies are a societal phenomenon in Ghana.

## 9.8 Effect on Family Support Systems

Some respondents asserted that there is also a breakdown of family social support systems, which is an essential part of livelihood in Ghanaian society, particularly in the rural areas. They cited the lack of reciprocal rural communal practices in the urban areas. These practices entail the provision of support and exchange of good and services such as farm produce, which occur in most rural farming areas such as Abutia. The reality, however, is that in urban areas, the cost of living is relatively higher, and most people earn a fixed income with no supplement. As a result the urban culture is more individualistic as people have to budget for their fixed income. Hence although the life style seems different, it simply reflects the realistic economic situation in urban areas.



## 9.9 Implications for Marital Relationships

Our study findings also showed that the massive departure of young males from Abutia to the cities has resulted in an imbalance in the marriage market, in both the villages and urban areas. As one young woman stated:

“Our parents keep telling us that according to our culture, we are getting old and should be married by now. But we cannot find good husbands because most of the responsible men have migrated. Oh, no! The ones left in the villages are no good. They may perform the customary marriage, but will not look after you and your children. How can we marry men who are not properly employed? Hm? But sadly, sometimes we are forced into situations that we do not plan for.”<sup>234</sup>

As evidenced by the above quote, some respondents opined that migration also causes an increase in the age at which they marry. Others argued that this is the case especially in the urban areas, because of the need to acquire certain basic necessities like accommodation, furniture, cooking utensils, among others, before marriage. Others also argued that the long absence of males who pioneer migration, from their spouses, has resulted in the break-up of some marriages. However, the divorce rate among migrants from Abutia was found to be rather low. Some migrants' wives said that they are aware that infidelity occurs in their marriages during the period that their husbands are away in the city, and they remain in the village. Discussions with female participants showed that they valued marriage very highly mainly for economic and socio-cultural reasons. Some

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<sup>234</sup>This was part of an in-depth interview with Akpene Amponsa, a 31 year old unmarried woman at Abutia Teti in March, 2006.

of them felt that marriage provided economic security for themselves and their children, and also gave them respect and value in their community.

It has been argued by researchers that sex selectivity of migrants in the sending areas has implications for fertility as separations from spouses may lead to long periods of abstinence (Anarfi et al. 2003). Although this assertion is partially applicable to Abutia situation, the relatively high number of children in households, is indicative of a high coital frequency that occurs when migrants visit their villages. However, this situation may be more attributable to migrant families in cities, as the economic conditions in urban areas has led to a decline in birth rate, with migrant families having 2-3 children (GSS, 2000a). Since most Abutia migrants in the cities are relatively more educated, they may be more predisposed to use contraception and this practice may also lower their fertility as well as family size.

### **9.10 Social Status of Households**

Another consequence of migration is its social implications for the status of migrant households within the community. The study found that it is prestigious to be a migrant household, and that this prestige increases with remittances. Respondents who indicated an increase in their social status explained that people respect or hold them in high esteem, simply because they have relatives either in the city or abroad. They added that people tend to be in awe of family members when migrants visit home for social functions. Others argued that people both admire and envy them. A few household

heads, however, indicated a decrease in their social status, which they attributed to lack of remittances to improve their economic situation. According to one head of household:

“It is a community expectation that when your children migrate, they should contribute to help their household back in the village. Now, if you have migrant children and yet receive no remittances, then the villagers cannot see any improvement in your lives. Then you become a mockery and people will not respect you. This worsens your social status.”<sup>235</sup>

### **9.11 Impact of Migration at the Community Level**

The research team also explored the views of community members pertaining to what they perceived to be the advantages and disadvantages of rural-urban migration at the community level. To this end, questions were framed to differentiate the consequences of migration on households from its effect on the community. The general theme that ran through responses was that the majority of the research participants felt that migration was beneficial to all the three village communities of Abutia Teti, Agorve and Kloe. The study results show that (101) households surveyed indicated that migration has had a positive impact on the community. Meanwhile a small minority of (6) argued that despite all the gains of migration, it had a relatively more negative impact on the villages.

In providing further explanation on the positive consequences of migration, respondents argued that the personal financial contribution by the migrants, as well as the donations

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<sup>235</sup>This is part of an interview with male head of household who has two sons in Accra. The older one works as a driver with the Ministry of Health and the younger one is a carpenter.

of the Abutia migrant associations in the cities, supported their community development projects. Others asserted that migration exposes their migrants to modernity in the cities, where they obtain new ideas and information which, they bring to bear on the development of the community. Some community members added that migrants invest in individual or family investments such as buildings, which provide employment for community members, and also enhance the status or image of the villages. This is evident in the narrative of one head of household:

“You see this family house? It was built by my father many, many years ago. During that time he used mud bricks and plastered it with cement. But now with the rains the foundation began to erode and one section collapsed. Thank God we had all gone to the farm when it happened so nobody was hurt. My son in the city, who works for the government, took a loan and has helped to slowly rebuild the house one section at a time, with proper cement and real cement foundation. We employed Efo Yaw, the mason, in the village, and Efo Kwaku the carpenter in Agorve who brought their apprentices and they worked in restoring the house. See the difference? Really beautiful isn’t it? Uhu. Thank the Lord. Now we can sleep without fear of the building collapsing on us. Now people respect us in the village because we have a cement house. (laughs). I must admit that the respect feels good” <sup>236</sup>

After enumerating all the benefits of migration, a small but noteworthy number of respondents expressed concern that migration actually has negative consequences on the sustainability of agriculture and food security, as well as social development in the villages. It is clear from the findings of our research that a fundamental rural-urban dichotomy remains in the minds of the Abutia villagers. For them, the rural centers represent security in the form of self-sufficiency in food, family reciprocal relationships,

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<sup>236</sup>This was part of an in-depth interview with Mrs. Bonney, a primary school teacher at Abutia Kloe, January, 2006.

as well as relative physical tranquility, whereas the urban areas represent better education and employment opportunities accompanied by better income and high risk.

### **9.12 Implications for Community Development**

As indicated earlier in the thesis, the positive contribution of migrants to economic development includes investments in the area of origin, which are viable but not too risky, and are not hindered by too much bureaucracy (Caldwell, 1969). This contention is evident in the Abutia situation, where migrants, migrant associations, chiefs, and community members, have initiated a series of development projects in the three villages to address the inadequacy of government rural infrastructure. The Abutia community members are aware of these positive contributions of migrants. Yet ironically, during discussions, some community members still expressed concern regarding the large number of migrants who have left Abutia for the urban areas. They argued that most of the able-bodied people were away and, therefore, could not provide the needed labour for community development projects.

Others argued that maybe the villages would have been more developed if less people had migrated. This argument was countered by other participants, who argued vehemently that migrant remittances and financial contributions to community development far outweighed any lost migrant labour. They added that more people would have been unemployed, youth delinquency and crime would have been high, and everyone in the three villages would all have been much poorer without migration.

Others added that the community development projects they currently had, would have been non-existent without the migrants. The discussions then turned to the numerous financial contributions that migrants have made to community development projects.

The development projects initiated by the villagers with financial contributions from Abutia migrants include the following: the building of KVIPs;<sup>237</sup> purchase of electric poles and the provision of electricity; building health posts; a post office at Kloe; a Junior Secondary School block. The migrants also built one long block consisting of four classrooms, a workshop for vocational/technical skills; as well as an administrative block/library for the Senior Secondary/Technical School. They also assisted in renovating and changing the old middle school block into classrooms for the technical division of the Senior Secondary/Technical School.

A former Assembly member for Abutia, in an interview with the researcher, explained that the Senior Secondary/Technical School project was a joint venture between the Ghana Education Service, the Ho District Assembly, and the communities of Abutia Teti, Agorve and Kloe. Under this arrangement, the Ho District Assembly and the communities were expected to provide one-third of the total cost of the project. The cost allocated to the villages was paid by the Abutia migrants' association in Accra. Community members also converted the old Traditional Council Court house into a wing of the Senior Secondary/Technical School. They also built a day nursery, for which the

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<sup>237</sup>As indicated earlier, these are public toilets that have their origin from Kumasi, the regional capital of the Ashanti region of Ghana. They are constructed by digging very deep holes over which cement square seats are built. They are well ventilated with the vent at the top of the building, thereby reducing the smell in the room. It can be constructed as a singular unit or for as many as ten units for the public.

December 31<sup>st</sup> Women's Movement donated all the timber for the roofing. The organization also assisted in building a gari factory, but this was closed when the new government into power. Migrants also assisted in negotiating for the construction of a feeder road between Sokode Gbogame and Abutia Kloe.

The research team members were informed that the main motivator behind the building of the Senior Secondary/Technical School was one Mr. Robert Amedzro, the proprietor of Universal Chemist Enterprises Limited, Tema, who is also a citizen of the town. Another citizen, Professor Erasmus Mornu, who is resident in the Philippines, had donated one electricity generating plant to the village of Abutia Teti. The generator was said to have been installed since 1989, prior to the introduction of rural electrification. It is now used at social functions whenever there is light-off. However, the generator was not working during the time of our research. It is clear that most of these community development projects were primarily funded with voluntary contributions in kind and cash from wealthy individual members of the communities concerned, and migrant associations, and occasionally, with the goodwill assistance of non-governmental organizations. Other sources of funding include revenue generating activities such as fundraising rallies and festivals, for instance the Yam festival or the Asafo festival.



PLATE: 9.1 Asafo festival celebrations at Abutia Teti.<sup>238</sup>

### 9.13 Recommendations by Community Members

It was obvious from our research experience, that men and women in Abutia hold very specific local or indigenous knowledge of their lived situation. This was clearly evident in the recommendations they made for solving the problems and challenges in their villages. During discussions, community members stressed that the lack of employment opportunities and poverty, underpin rural-urban migration in the villages. They emphasized adequate job creation, which will provide employment for the youth and adults, and thereby provide income and curb the drift to urban areas. Others suggested skills training for the youth in order to equip them with alternate livelihood strategies.

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<sup>238</sup>The Asafo festival depicts the Abutia migratory history, the wars they fought and their victories and defeats. It attracts migrants from all over the country, and the festival is used to raise funds for community development projects.



Another recommendation was that government and the private sector should work jointly and set up agro-based industries in the Abutia. This was suggested as a source of agricultural waged employment alternatives for people considering working in agro-based industries rather than working exclusively on their own farms (Mikell, 1997). It was argued that the agro-based industry will serve as a catalyst for increased production in agriculture, thereby improving on the food security situation in the district. Community members also recommended training in supplementary agricultural activities such as bee-keeping, afforestation and teak production. Some women suggested that the land tenure system must be reviewed to enhance their accessibility to land, because they the backbone of farming in Abutia. Other respondents indicated that farming co-operatives should be established to enable community members have access to finances as well as agricultural inputs such as seeds and fertilizers.

A large number of participants recommended that micro financial services should be provided to men and women to enable them pursue their livelihood activities more effectively. Others called for the establishment of cottage industries such as oil palm and gari processing plants to help women reduce household poverty. There was also a suggestion to establish higher educational facilities and improved educational services beyond the existing levels in the research area, so as to retain the educated youth who wish to further their education.

Others community members recommended that an agricultural college should be established in the district to absorb the youth. Most women complained about the lack of

credit facilities for women, and recommended that financial assistance should be provided specifically to women, to enable them pursue both farm and non-farm livelihood more effectively. There was a call to encourage the formation of *susu* co-operatives to enable women have more improved access, and to operate and manage local financial services more efficiently. Another important suggestion pertained to rural infrastructure, of which water and sanitation were at the top of the list. This was followed by improved medical care and health facilities, roads, markets, energy and communication facilities. Finally, community members suggested that the road from Abutia Kloe through Kissiflui to Juapong, which is in a rather terrible state, should be tarred. This undertaking will provide community members access to other agricultural villages, especially to the Kissiflui market, which is the nearest large market in the area.



Plate 9.2: A Group of Community Members in Abutia Kloe.

## 9.14 Conclusion

This chapter discussed some specific features of migration in Ghana as follows: it is usually the rural poor who migrate to urban areas, in the face of poverty and economic desperation. Those migrants with education find work in the formal sector, while those without education and relevant vocational skills, find work in the informal sector, and are forced to reside in slum and squatter settlements. Most migrants are able eventually, to send remittances in varying amounts to assist household members in the rural areas. In examining the incidence of poverty based on non-income measures, the study found that, the level of poverty is high in all three villages. However, compared to non-migrant households, the incidence of poverty among migrant households is a bit lower.

The study found that the migration of able bodied men from the villages has detrimental consequence for agriculture, as labour loss affects farm productivity and household food supply in a significant and negative way. On the other hand, migrant remittances have positive effects on household incomes and community development projects. The research findings reflect the stance of two schools of thought: the supporters of the pure gain theory, who argue that migration benefits the migrant, household and community, because the migrant is able to send steady remittances to this family. By contrast, theorists of private gain and social loss, believe that the migrant enjoys a private net gain, but that the household and community as a whole, lose a productive member.

The chapter also presented our analysis of the ways in which rural women's socio-cultural, economic and political position in the household and community is either

enhanced or undermined by male out-migration. Our findings show that Abutia women's economic, socio-cultural, and political position remains the same in some cases, and deteriorates in others, with rural-urban migration (Boserup 1970). We found that rural-urban migration increases women's workloads, without improvement in their economic livelihood or social status, and that they remain subordinate to men. Rather, a new dimension of responsibility is added to the women's workload when men migrate in search of wage labour (Brydon and Chant, 1989). For instance, when men migrate, women continue to be responsible for their domestic duties. In addition to this, they must also spend adequate time on their primary and secondary sources of livelihood.

In the case of Abutia where agriculture is the primary source of livelihood, in many cases women often assume greater responsibility of agricultural productivity when men leave. Abutia women are, therefore, increasingly faced with a "double workday" of responsibility for household tasks and commodity production (Fernandez-Kelly, 1981). The juggling of roles by women and ensuring continued household productivity and management, is what makes it possible for the men to migrate and work outside the household. Sadly enough, their sacrifices and contributions to the economy are not acknowledged. Instead, they are usually taken for granted by household members, the community, policymakers and development practitioners alike.

## **CHAPTER 10**

### **SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION**

This dissertation has examined the interrelationship between gender, migration and rural livelihood in Ghana, with particular reference to the Abutia villages of Teti, Agorve and Kloe in the Ho District. We may recall at this moment that our theoretical starting point was the notion that in spite of the growing literature on migration and livelihood, gender has been ignored in the discourse. Another premise was that the linkage between these phenomena has not been explored adequately, if at all. In question was the relationship between the social construction of gender, the division of labour within households, the socio-economic status of households, the migration decision, that is who migrates, the determinants or motivation for migration, and the process of rural-urban migration. Most importantly, the study examined the logical relation of these concepts with households in the rural sending areas, particularly the implications for women's farm and non-farm livelihood, household responsibilities, and their status within the household.

This study presents a theoretical argument that the linkages between migration and livelihood are best understood as a series of relationships between socio-cultural, political and economic factors underpinned by gender dynamics in the community. For this reason it was important to go back and examine the evolution of women's position in the Ghanaian society. Taking a historical perspective, the study discussed the relatively high

social status enjoyed by women during the pre-colonial era, and how their position in society was negatively affected by the introduction of Euro-centric values of colonialism. The literature revealed that although gender inequities and inequalities predated colonialism, the disparity was worsened during the colonial era, and has become an irreversible trend, which has been carried into contemporary times.

The social reality of most Ghanaian women is underpinned by the fact that they face many different and more severe constraints than men, which arise from socio-cultural norms. These gender disparities and gender inequalities remain widespread, and hinder Ghanaian women from obtaining access to, and control of resources; in participating in economic ventures; and in having a political voice as a collective (Mikell, 1997). It is evident, from the foregoing analysis, that rural Ghanaian women are seriously disadvantaged in every sector of the economy. This is largely attributed to structures entrenched in the socio-cultural and political system, which discriminates against women.

Drawing on the work of gender scholars, the study discussed the important role that rural women play in economic development, especially agriculture. At the rural level, Ghanaian women are the main socio-economic backbone of the economy. They prepare the land, work the fields, are in charge of harvest and post-harvest activities, and feed and meet other family needs. Yet in spite of the contribution these women make to the Ghanaian economy, they are not integrated as partners in the planning, programming, implementation and management of rural development projects. This situation arose because the agricultural sector, which is the predominant source of livelihood for rural

women, is neglected by most policy makers. Thus despite Ghanaian women's involvement in central aspects of production, patriarchal ideologies ensure their subordination. An FAO (2000) report found that government interventions did little to address the plight of rural women. To some extent, vertical approaches to development have inadvertently marginalized migration and livelihood issues, and created a dichotomy between rural and urban development. This has compromised the effectiveness of development interventions. This already poor socio-economic position of rural women is worsened by rural-urban migration.

There is a large body of empirical evidence showing that ignoring gender considerations in policy formulation is reflected in the perpetuation of chronic development problems. These include slower economic growth, rising food insecurity among vulnerable groups, weaker governance, rural-urban migration, the feminization of agriculture and poverty, lower quality of life for women, environmental degradation and high population growth.<sup>239</sup> Ghanaian women have low participation in national and regional policymaking, invisibility in national statistics, and a low participation in extension services with the exception of home economics programs. Even when women were targeted as beneficiaries of development projects, it was generally in their reproductive capacity or as targets of welfare interventions. This meant that issues that are of concern to women, had been neglected in the design and implementation of many development policies and programs.

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<sup>239</sup> See Amanor (2001). See also Chapter 5 of this thesis.

Recognizing the important work of feminist scholars, the study discussed the different perspectives of women in development and policy approaches, to provide a better understanding of the dynamics of the migration process from a gender perspective. The issue of gender transcends the boundary of development to incorporate the everyday experience of Ghanaian women. So when answering to the issue of migration and livelihood of women in Ghana, the answer lies in the examination of gender relations and gender ideologies in the country. In other words a discussion of gender, migration and rural livelihood must entail an analysis of the lived reality of these women and men.

In order to situate migration globally, the study discussed the types, patterns and determinants of migration in other developing countries, and the theories that have underpinned migration literature. The study however, found that gender is still largely ignored in the migration literature. Despite intensive calls for the inclusion of women in migration studies over the past decade, social researchers still lack a major theoretical paradigm that applies to women's migration experience. One primary reason that women have been invisible in most migration treatments may be that they are commonly perceived as "associational" migrants who follow spouses. Even though the trend has changed and many women are migrating independently, this trend has not been fully integrated into migration research and scholarship.

In order to obtain empirical evidence pertaining to the case of Ghana, we undertook six months of field work in Aboya. The study discussed the various ethnographic methods employed to obtain the research data from households surveyed, regarding their



migration experience. Through our research of households in Abutia Teti, Agorve and Kloe, several key findings emerged regarding migration. First of all, that the role that non-migrant women play is critical to the migration behaviour of other household members. In the case of Ghana, male migration patterns in which households continue to reside locally would not be possible without women to assume the household productive and reproductive responsibilities in the rural areas.

Our findings of the households surveyed show that migration is highly selective by sex and age. Our data shows that rural-urban migration involves more males than females in Abutia, although an increasing number of females are becoming migrants. Additionally, that migration peaks at age 20-29 and generally involves those aged 15-40 years. The high sex ratio of male dominance in migration destination areas means that most of the people left behind in sending areas are women, who must cope with the consequences of the predominantly male out-migration.

The consequences of migration on Abutia women's livelihood, is systemic, with far-reaching implications for the daily lives of these rural women. It was clear from our findings that male out-migration, results in decreased agricultural productivity, which places an additional burden on women's work and health, as they struggle to diversify their livelihood by supplementing declining income with petty trading. Combined with increased household responsibilities and other family pressures, this struggle further reduces the time available for women to participate in non-farm income generating

activities. However, without any alternative, they are compelled to spend equally long hours on these activities, thereby resulting in women experiencing longer work days.

The migration of men into the cities has also resulted in an increased number of rural households being headed by women. One important consequence of migration on the household is that women are filling the roles of absent males, both within the household and in the community. This increased responsibility, however, does not modify women's socio-economic status, or translate into more authority and autonomy, as women continue to be subordinate to men.

Overall, this study has analyzed the various ways in which the Ghanaian gender system influences migration, thereby helping to understand the consequences of rural-urban migration on households and women's livelihood. Through this study we realize that there are gaps in the planning process, as gender is excluded from policy formulation and implementation. Clearly, there is no system in place to provide information that challenges entrenched patriarchal views and opinions about female-male relationships in migration and rural livelihood as well as social change processes. At the same time, however, such expressions point to a combination of a sense of powerlessness and resistance about government's neglect of issues concerning the rural population.

It is evident that the government of Ghana has a critical role to play in empowering women, and promoting an equitable and fair distribution of resources, in order to enhance rural livelihoods in the midst of continued rural-urban migration. There is a need for all

stakeholders to study the consequences of rural-urban migration on Ghanaian households, especially its impact on women's livelihood. This knowledge will equip development practitioners more effectively to undertake gender sensitive and gender balanced development, for achieving an optimum welfare of the rural population.

## **10.2 Areas for Further Research**

In addition to the main arguments of the thesis, a number of issues which were raised require further research and analysis, as they are beyond the scope of this thesis. First, it is necessary for government to undertake research on the sensitive issue of land tenure, and to plan towards eliminating all discriminatory practices. Second, there is a need for more comprehensive research, which fully addresses gender constraints of Ghanaian women, across the socio-economic and cultural spectrum. The focus of the research should address the level and content of women's involvement in the development process and the implication of gender inequalities. Possible research areas could include policy-making in Ghana and the gender impact of these policies. This is important because policies are the blueprint for some of the most vital involvement of government and other decision-makers and power brokers in the country. Even though our research focused on gender, migration and rural livelihood in Ghana, our findings may be useful in other African countries. It is hoped that the thesis will be a modest contribution to the discourse on rural-urban migration, gender and rural development in Africa.

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## **APPENDICES**

### **LIST OF APPENDICES**

Appendix 1	Glossary
Appendix 2	Household Socio-Economic Survey Questionnaire
Appendix 3	In-depth Interview Guide
Appendix 4	Guide to Focus Group Discussions
Appendix 5	Guide to Semi-Structured Interview with Abutia Migrants in Accra

**APPENDIX 1****GLOSSARY****BASELINE DEFINITIONS OF KEY CONCEPTS****AND TERMS****Culture:**

Culture can be defined as the distinctive pattern of ideas, beliefs and norms which characterize the way of life and relations of a society or groups within a society. Culturally determined gender ideologies define rights and responsibilities, as well as what is considered an “appropriate” behaviour for women and men. They also influence access to, and control over resources, and participation in decision-making. These gender ideologies often reinforce male power, and the idea of women’s inferiority. Culture is sometimes interpreted narrowly as “custom” or ‘tradition’, and assumed to be natural and unchangeable. Despite these assumptions, culture is fluid and enduring. Dominant cultures reinforce the position of those with economic, political and social power, and therefore, tend to reinforce male power. Globalization also has implications for the diffusion of culture, particularly of western culture.

**Development:**

Development refers to human well-being, including individual civil and political liberties, as well as meeting the physical and material needs of human society. Human development is about increasing peoples’ choices and creating an enabling environment



in which people can develop their full potential and lead productive and creative lives in accordance with their needs (UNDP, 2002). Holistic human development is about creating an enabling environment that empowers a population to actively participate in making choices affecting their lives and harnessing potential to improve on their livelihood.

### **Double/Multiple Burden:**

The division of production/reproduction spheres has doubled the burden of women in participating in productive activities, i.e. they bear the burden of paid work (as part of the labour force) and unpaid work (at home). This double/multiple burden makes it difficult for women to get better jobs and better training, and to move up the professional ladder.

### **Empowerment:**

Is about people, that is both women and men, taking control over their lives, setting their own agendas, gaining skills, building self-confidence, solving problems and developing self-reliance. Whilst individuals need to empower themselves, institutions including international cooperation agencies, can support processes that nurtures the self-empowerment of individuals or groups.

### **Gender:**

Refers to the socially constructed roles ascribed to males and females. It is the culturally specific set of characteristics that identifies the social behaviour of women and men and the relationship between them. These roles are learned, they change over time, and vary

widely within and across cultures. Whereas biological sex identity is determined by reference to genetic and anatomical characteristics, socially learned gender is acquired by identity. Gender, therefore, refers not simply to women or men, but to the relationship between them, and the way it is constructed. Because it is a relational term, gender must include women and men. Like the concepts of class, race and ethnicity, gender is an analytical tool for understanding social processes.

### **Gender-Based Analysis:**

Is a tool to identify the status, roles and responsibilities of men and women in society, as well as their access to and control of resources, benefits, and opportunities. It is a framework by which to compare the relative advantages/disadvantages faced by men and women in various spheres of life, as in the family, the workplace, the community, and political system. It is also a set of standards against which the potential gender impacts of programs and policies can be judged. It involves looking at the sexual division of labour, the access and control men and women have over inputs required for their labour, and the outputs (benefits) of their labour. It also refers to a systematic way of looking at the different consequences of development efforts on women and men. Gender analysis takes into account how factors of class, race, ethnicity or other factors interact with gender to produce discriminatory results.

Pertaining to policy, it is a process that assesses the differential impact of proposed and/or existing policies, programs and legislation on women and men. It makes it possible for policy to be undertaken with an appreciation of gender differences, of the

relationships between women and men, and of their different social realities, life expectations and economic circumstances. It is a tool for understanding social processes and for responding with informed and equitable options. It compares how and why women and men are affected by policy issues. Gender-based analysis challenged the assumption that everyone is affected by policies, programmes and legislation in the same way regardless of gender, a notion often referred to as “gender-neutral policy.”

**Gender and Development (GAD):**

The GAD approach focuses on intervention processes that address unequal gender relations which prevent inequitable development and often lock women out of full participation. GAD seeks to have both women and men participate, make decisions and share benefits equally. This approach often aims at meeting practical needs as well as promoting strategic interests. A successful GAD approach requires sustained long-term commitment.

**Gender Disaggregated-Data:**

This refers to statistical information that differentiates between men and women. For example “number of women in the labour force” instead of “number of people in the labour force.” This allows one to see where there are gender gaps.

**Gender Discrimination:**

The systematic, unfavourable treatment of individuals on the basis of their gender, which denies them rights, opportunities or resources. Across the world, women are treated unequally and less value is placed on their lives because of their gender. Women's differential access to power and control of resources is central to this discrimination in all institutional spheres, i.e. the household, community, market and state. Within the household, women and girls can face discrimination in the sharing out of household resources including food, sometimes leading to higher malnutrition and mortality indicators for women. At its extreme, gender discrimination can lead to son preference. In the labour market, unequal pay, occupational exclusion or segregation into low skill and low paid work limit women's earnings in comparison to those of men of similar education levels.

### **Gender Division of Labour:**

Refers to the socially determined ideas and practices which define what roles and activities are deemed appropriate for women and men. Whilst gender division of labour tends to be seen as natural and immutable, in fact these ideas and practices are socially constructed. These result in context-specific patterns of who does what by gender and how this is valued. Gender divisions of labour are not necessarily rigidly defined in terms of men's and women's roles, as is sometimes assumed. They are characterized by cooperation in joint activities, as well as by separation. Often, the accepted norm regarding gender divisions varies from the actual practice.

However, roles typically designated as female are almost invariably less valued than those designated as male. Women are generally expected to fulfill the reproductive role of bearing and raising children, caring for other family members, and household management tasks, as well as home-based production. Men tend to be more associated with productive roles, particularly paid work, and market production. In the labour market, although women's overall participation rates are rising, they tend to be confined to a relatively narrow range of occupations or concentrated in lower grades than men, thereby usually earning less.

**Gender Equality:**

This means that both women and men enjoy the same status, and have equal conditions for realizing their full potential to contribute to the political, economic, social and cultural development of their economies, and to benefit from the results. It means that one's rights or opportunities do not depend on being male or female. Gender equality can only be achieved through partnership between women and men.

Originally, it was believed that equality could be achieved by giving women and men the same opportunities, on the assumption that this would bring sameness to yield equal results. Today, the concept of equality acknowledges that different treatment of women and men may sometimes be required to achieve sameness of results, because of different life conditions or to compensate for past discrimination. Gender equality is, therefore, the equal valuing by society of both the similarities and differences between women and men, and the varying roles that they play.

### **Gender Mainstreaming:**

Is an organizational strategy to bring a gender perspective to all aspects of an institution's policy and activities, through building gender capacity and accountability. In the 1970s, the strategies put in place for integrating women into development by establishing separate women's units within state and development institutions, had only made slow progress by the mid 1980s. In light of this, the need was identified for broader change in order to effectively challenge the pervasive male advantage. Adding women-specific activities at the margin was no longer seen as sufficient. As a result gender mainstreaming was introduced.

With a mainstreaming strategy, gender concerns are seen as important to all aspects of development; for all sectors and areas of activity, and a fundamental part of the planning process. Responsibility for the implementation of gender policy is diffused across the organizational structure, rather than concentrated in a small central unit. Most major development organizations and many governments have now embraced "gender mainstreaming" as a strategy for moving towards gender equality.

### **Gender Needs:**

These are the shared and prioritized needs identified by women that arise from their common experiences as a gender. There are certain women's interests, of a political or practical nature, which are specifically related to their experience as a gendered group. Such prioritized concerns have been translated into the concept of gender needs (Moser,

1989). Gender needs, therefore, identifies ways in which women's gender interests, defined by women themselves, can be satisfied in the planning process. Although needs and interests are conceptually different (Molyneau 1998), in practice, they are closely related in the planning process. Needs, as well as interests, result from a political process of contestation and interpretation, and thus should not be externally defined as fixed.

*Practical Gender Needs (PGNs)* according to Moser (1989) are the immediate needs identified by women to assist their survival in their socially acceptable roles, within existing power structures. Policies to meet PGNs tend to focus on ensuring that women and their families have adequate living conditions, such as health care and food provision, access to safe water and sanitation, and it also seeks to ensure access to income-generating opportunities. PGNs do not directly challenge gender inequalities, even though these needs may be a direct result of women's subordinate position in society.

*Strategic gender needs (SGNs)*, are those needs identified by women that require strategies for challenging male dominance and privilege. These needs may relate to inequalities in the gender division of labour, in ownership and control of resources, in participation in decision-making, or to experiences of domestic and other sexual violence. These needs are often seen as feminist in nature as they seek to change women's status and position in society in relation to men. As such, they are more likely to be resisted than PGNs.

### **Gender Planning:**

This refers to the technical and political processes and procedures necessary to implement gender-sensitive policy and practice. The purpose of gender planning is to ensure gender-sensitive policy outcomes through a systematic and inclusive process. If gender policy has transformatory goals, then gender planning as a process will necessarily be a political one, involving consultation with and participation of different stakeholders.

### **Gender Relations:**

Hierarchical relations of power between women and men that tend to disadvantage women. These gender hierarchies are often accepted as “natural” but are socially determined relations, culturally based, and are subject to change over time. They can be seen in a range of gendered practices, such as the division of labour and resources, and gendered ideologies, such as ideas of acceptable behaviour for women and men.

Analysis which focus on gender relations differ in emphasis from those which take “gender roles” as a starting point. They give more prominence to the connectedness of men’s and women’s lives, and to the imbalances of power embedded in male-female relations. They also emphasize the interaction of gender relations with other hierarchical social relations such as class, caste, ethnicity and race. But whether gender relations act to alleviate, or to exacerbate other social inequalities, depends on the context.

Hierarchical gender relations constrain development efforts. For example, rigidities in the gender division of labour limit the effective mobilization of women’s efforts are



hampered where men use their authority to usurp control over resources targeted at women. Development strategies need to be informed by an analysis of gender relations, and to support women's own attempts to change the rules and practices, which reinforce these gender hierarchies.

### **Intra-household Resource Distribution:**

This refers to the dynamics of how different resources that are generated within, or which come into the household, are accessed and controlled by its members. Gender analysis has revealed some evidence of bias against female members of households, in the allocation of resources such as income, food, nutrition, health care and education. These patterns are not universal, however, and are also mediated by other factors such as age, and birth order. For example, there is little evidence of nutritional bias against girl children in sub-Saharan Africa, whereas in South Asia this pattern has been widely noted (Francis 2000). It has also been shown that resources controlled by women, for example in female-headed households, are distributed differently to resources controlled by men. There is some evidence that women spend a higher percentage of their generally smaller incomes on family consumption and children's welfare.

### **Migration**

Anarfi et al. (2001:4-7) define migration as a permanent or semi-permanent change of residence by an individual or group of people. Migration entails the physical movement of people from one place to another for the betterment of life. Rural-urban migration is

the migration of people from rural areas into cities. In this study, I have used migration as both temporal and permanent movement of people (individual and whole family).

### **Migrant:**

This refers to an individual who has at least one prior residence, in a different administrative unit from his or her current residence.

### **Multiple Roles of Women:**

These refer to the reproductive, productive and community-level roles that are assigned to women. Reproductive role involves child-bearing, child-rearing and household management tasks of women. Productive role, on the other hand, involves the income-earning tasks whether in the formal or informal sector. Meanwhile, community level role involves the activities done by women in order to maintain the community where they belong, most of which are on voluntary basis.

### **Non-Governmental Organization (NGO):**

NGO's are non-profit development organizations, many of which depend on donations from members, the public or funding development agencies. There are many types of NGOs such as international, national and local; large and small; specialized (e.g. health or agriculture) or general (combining many sectors of activity).

### **Participation:**

This is the direct involvement of various groups of people in a development process, which aims to build the people's capabilities to have access to, and to take control of resources, and opportunities towards self-reliance and an improved quality of life. It means providing both men and women, young and old, equitable access to the opportunities, benefits and resources available in a society. It is an essential ingredient of people's empowerment.

### **Patriarchy:**

This refers to the universal political structure, which privileges men at the expense of women. It means "rule of the father", and was originally used by anthropologists to describe the social structure in which one old man (the patriarch) has absolute power over everyone else in the family. A patriarchal social system is one in which a polarization of the sexes exists. Men occupy positions of dominance and control over women. Men, as husbands and fathers, tend to rule with unchallenged authority over the lives of their women and children. In a pure patriarchal society, sexual differentiation pervades all life activities, experiences and opportunities. The main "sites" of patriarchal oppression have been identified as housework, paid work, the state, culture, sexuality, and violence.

### **Productive Activities:**

It involves the production of goods and services for consumption and trade (farming, fishing, employment and self-employment). When people are asked what they do, the response is not often related to productive work, especially work which is paid and generates income. Both men and women can be involved in productive activities, but for

the most part, their functions and responsibilities will differ according to the gender division of labour. Women's productive work is often less visible and less valued than that of men.

**Sex:**

This refers to the biological difference between men and women that are universal and determined at birth, which categorizes someone as either female or male.

**“Trickle Down:”**

The assumption, which comes from neo-classical economics, that if economic growth is achieved, then benefits will eventually “trickle down” from the wealth producers to the poorest sections of the population.

**Women's Empowerment:**

This refers to a tool and framework in development practice, which allows women to be beneficiaries as well as participants in development planning, programmes and activities. The most important advantage is that the participation of women allows them to make decisions where their views and perspectives are considered. It is a “bottom-up” process of transforming gender power relations, through individuals or groups by developing awareness of women's subordination, and building their capacity to change it.

**Women's Human Rights:**

This refers to the recognition that women's rights are human rights, and that women experience injustices solely because of their gender.

### **Women in Development (WID):**

This means a development framework or approach which gives recognition to the distinct needs and capacities of women, and aims to integrate women into the existing development process by targeting them, often in women-specific activities. Women are usually passive recipients in WID projects, which often emphasize making women more efficient producers and increasing their income (Desai & Potter, 2002). Although many WID projects have improved health, income or resources in the short term, because they did not transform unequal relationships, a significant number were not sustainable. A common shortcoming of WID projects is that they do not consider women's multiple roles or they miscalculate the elasticity of women's time and labour.

### **Livelihood:**

A livelihood is considered as consisting of the assets, activities and entitlements that enable people to make a living (Singh et al 1994, cited in de Haan, 2000:127). Assets are determined by human capital, social capital, natural capital and physical capital. According to Ellis (1998:10), a livelihood comprises the assets (natural, physical, human, financial and social capital), the activities, and the access to these (mediated by institutions and social relations) that together determine the living gained by the individual or household. This study considers livelihood as a way to create different assets, activities and entitlements, which enable people to make a living.

### **Livelihood Assets:**

Livelihood assets are the basic building blocks upon which households are able to undertake production, engage in labour markets, and participate in reciprocal exchange with other households (Ellis, 1998:31). In other words it can be described as flow of capital that can be utilized directly, or indirectly, to generate the means of survival of the household or to sustain its material well-being. As mentioned above, there are five livelihood assets - human capital, natural capital, social capital, physical capital, financial capital. In this study, focus has been given to human capital, social capital, physical capital and financial capital.

### **Livelihood Strategies:**

Livelihood strategies are the ways in which people adopt different activities for survival in different socio-economic and environmental settings. According to Ellis (1998:46), livelihood strategies are composed of activities that generate the means of household survival. Scoones (1998:9) identifies three types of rural livelihood strategies: agricultural intensification or extensification, livelihood diversification including, both paid employment and rural enterprises, and migration (including income generation and remittances). Carney (1998 in [www.odi.org.uk](http://www.odi.org.uk) and Ellis, 1998:50-51) list these categories of livelihood strategies as natural resource based, non-natural resource based including, migration and remittances and other transfers.

### **Natural Capital:**

Natural capital comprises the land, water and biological resources that are utilized by people to generate means of survival. Sometimes these are referred to as environmental resources, and are thought of jointly as comprising the environment (Ellis, 1998:52). Natural capital is not static nor is its utilization for survival purposes confined to gathering activities.

### **Physical Capital:**

Physical assets comprise capitals that are created by economic production processes. Buildings, irrigation canals, roads, tools, machines, communications, and so on are physical assets. In economic terms, physical capital is defined as a producer good as contrasted to a consumer good. For example, roads have multiple effects in reducing the spatial costs of transactions in resources and outputs. They also facilitate movement of people between places offering different income earning opportunities (Ellis, 1998:53). Thus, this is the capitals which are available to the people that enable them to earn their livelihood.

### **Human Capital:**

It is often said that the chief asset possessed by the poor is their own labour. Human capital refers to the labour available to the household: its educational acquisition, skills, and health (Carney, 1998). Human capital is increased by investment in education and training, as well as by the skills acquired through pursuing one or more occupations (ibid: 33). It enables individuals to work or pursue different sources of livelihood.

### **Financial Capital:**

Financial capital refers the stocks of money to which a household has access. These are available to people in the forms of savings, supplies of credit or regular remittances or pensions which enables people to pursue their livelihood (Fan 2003:134).

### **Social Capital:**

Moser (1998, cited in England 2002:136), defines social capital as reciprocity within communities, and between households based on trust deriving from social ties. It attempts to capture community and wider social claims on which individuals and households can draw, by virtue of their belonging to social groups of varying degree of inclusiveness in society at large (Adepoju, 2000:97). It is social network system where the individuals and households can produce livelihood through the relations e.g. community, family. The World Bank (1997 cited in Agesa & Kim, 2001:139) has defined social capital as ‘the internal rules, norms and long-term relationship that facilitate coordinated actions, and enable people to undertake co-operative ventures for mutual advantages. According to Putnam (1993 cited in Agesa & Kim, 2001:140), social capital can be defined as the “features of social organizations,” such as networks, norms, and trust that facilitate action and co-operation for mutual benefits.

### **Political Capital:**

It is important to include as political capital as it analyzes policies, institutions and processes, which influence the choices that people are able to make with their capital assets. According to Gadzar (2003:67), politics is recognized as ‘playing a fundamental



role' in causing poverty, and therefore, it cannot be left out of a framework that has as its objective an understanding of poverty. Furthermore, political capital is an asset that links an individual or a group to power structures and policy outside the locality. Therefore, Political capital is critical for turning sustainable livelihood from a useful descriptive framework, into an operational decision-making tool and important to understand how it works into the framework.

## **APPENDIX 2**

### **HOUSEHOLD SOCIO-ECONOMIC SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE**

Number of Field:..... Number of Questionnaire:.....

Name of village:.....

House Number of Respondent:.....

#### **Introduction of Survey**

Good morning, day or evening as applicable.

My name is.....

I will like to speak to the head of the family/household, please.

(In the absence of the head of household, speak to another adult (next in line for position of head of household)).

I wish to ask for your assistance in conducting a research on the migration of people from the village to the towns and cities. The purpose of the research is to determine who migrates and why. I also wish to find out the consequences of migration on the households left behind in the village. Our focus will be on the livelihood and household responsibilities of household members, especially women. This research is being undertaken by Justina Dugbazah who is a Ghanaian PhD student at the University of Birmingham in the UK. Every person in the village has an equal opportunity of being included in the research.

Would you or/and another adult from the household who could be considered the head of household be willing to answer a few questions? You are not obliged to take part in the survey. You may also refuse to answer any question, or stop the survey at any time. Your answers will be kept strictly confidential and your name will not be used in any official documents without your approval (if you wish). The interview will last for about an hour, and you can feel free to answer honestly and openly. Do you wish to continue or would you like me to make an appointment and return at another time?

(If yes, continue interview, if not make an appointment for a mutually convenient time).

## IDENTIFICATION

Name of Researcher or Assistant: .....

Name of Village: .....

House Number of Respondent:.....

Number of Questionnaire:.....

Date of Initial Contact: .....

Date of Survey: .....

Date of Follow-up Meeting (if any) .....

## A. SOCIAL BACKGROUND AND HOUSEHOLD COMPOSITION

1. Sex of Household Head/Respondent:

- |           |          |
|-----------|----------|
| 1. Male   | (      ) |
| 2. Female | (      ) |

2. Age Bracket of Household Head/Respondent:

- |          |       |          |
|----------|-------|----------|
| 9.14.1.1 | 21-30 | (      ) |
| 9.14.1.2 | 31-40 | (      ) |
| 9.14.1.3 | 41-50 | (      ) |
| 9.14.1.4 | 51-60 | (      ) |
| 9.14.1.5 | 61-70 | (      ) |
| 9.14.1.6 | 71-80 | (      ) |

3. Where were you born?

- |                        |          |
|------------------------|----------|
| 1. In Abutia           | (      ) |
| 2. In the Ho district  | (      ) |
| 3. Outside Ho district | (      ) |

4. Which Ghanaian language(s) do you speak?

- |                   |          |
|-------------------|----------|
| 1. Ewe - Ewedome  | (      ) |
| 2. Ewe - Anlo     | (      ) |
| 3. Ewe - Tongu    | (      ) |
| 4. Ewe - Genyigbe | (      ) |
| 5. Akan           | (      ) |
| 6. Ga             | (      ) |
| 7. Adangbe        | (      ) |

5. Do you understand spoken English?
1. Yes ( )
  2. No ( )
6. Do you read and write English?
1. Yes ( )
  2. No ( )
7. Have you ever been to school?
- 10 Yes ( )
  - 11 No ( )
8. What is the highest level of education that you have?
1. None/Not applicable ( )
  2. Primary school ( )
  3. Middle School ( )
  4. Junior Secondary ( )
  5. Senior Secondary/Middle School ( )
  6. Commercial/Vocational/Technical ( )
  7. Post Secondary/Polytechnic ( )
  8. Tertiary – University/Teachers Training etc. ( )
9. What is your religious denomination?
1. No religion ( )
  2. Traditional religion ( )
  3. Presbyterian ( )
  4. Pentecostal (indicate) \_\_\_\_\_ ( )
  5. Methodist ( )
  6. Anglican ( )
  7. Catholic ( )
  8. Muslim ( )
10. What social functions do you attend most?
1. None ( )
  2. Wedding – Traditional/Religious ( )
  3. Child out-dooring/naming ceremony ( )
  4. Church Services ( )
  5. Funerals ( )
  6. Other (Indicate) \_\_\_\_\_ ( )
11. How often do you attend this social function?
1. Once a week ( )
  2. Two times a week ( )
  3. Once a month ( )
  4. Once every few months ( )

5. A few times in a year (      )
12. What is your marital status?
1. Single/never married (      )
  2. Living together/Common Law (      )
  3. Traditional marriage (monogamous) (      )
  4. Traditional marriage (polygamous) (      )
  5. Church marriage (monogamous) (      )
  6. Divorced/Separated (      )
  7. Widowed (      )
13. How many children are there in your family?
1. 1 – 3 (      )
  2. 4 - 8 (      )
  3. 9 -12 (      )
14. How many are girls?
1. 1 – 2 (      )
  2. 3 - 4 (      )
  3. 4 – 6 (      )
15. How many are boys?
1. 1 – 2 (      )
  2. 3 – 4 (      )
  3. 4 – 6 (      )
16. Do other relatives reside in the household?
1. Yes (      )
  2. No (      )
17. If yes, explain: (Pls. allow multiple answers)
- 12 Niece(s) (      )
  - 13 Nephew(s) (      )
  - 14 Brother(s) (      )
  - 15 Sister(s) (      )
  - 16 Mother (      )
  - 17 Father (      )
  - 18 Auntie (      )
  - 19 Uncle (      )
  - 20 Grandmother (      )
  - 21 Grandfather (      )

## **B. ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES OF THE HOUSEHOLD**

18. What is your primary economic activity or main occupation?

1. Unemployed ( )
2. Farmer ( )
3. Artisan (indicate) \_\_\_\_\_ ( )
4. Petty Trader ( )
5. Business person ( )
6. Homemaker ( )
7. Domestic worker ( )
8. Labourer ( )
9. Teacher ( )
10. Government Worker ( )
11. Clergy ( )
12. Retired civil servant ( )

19. Are you involved in any secondary economic activity(ies)?

1. None ( )
2. Subsistence farming ( )
3. Gardening ( )
4. Petty trading ( )
5. Business ( )
6. Craft making ( )
7. Baking ( )
8. Other \_\_\_\_\_ ( )

20. Do you require any of these inputs for your main economic activity?

1. Land for farming ( )
2. Hired labour ( )
3. Tractor ( )
4. Fertilizer, weed killers, farm implements ( )
5. Financial capital for farming/ trading or business ( )
- Indicate: \_\_\_\_\_
6. Education/Information ( )
7. None of the above ( )

21. Who controls the allocation of land or provided land to your household for farming?

1. Husband ( )
2. Wife ( )
3. Husband's family/relatives ( )
4. Wife's family/relatives ( )

22. Please explain your family farm distribution.

1. There is only one family farm ( )
2. Family farm, and wife has a separate farm ( )
3. Family farm, and husband has a separate farm ( )
4. Family farm, and husband and wife have separate farms ( )
5. Husband and wife have separate farms ( )

23. Have you received help from any level of government?

1. Yes ( )
2. No ( )

24. If yes, what type of assistance did you receive?

1. Financial assistance – grant/loan ( )
2. Other: (indicate type) \_\_\_\_\_

25. Indicate level of government that provided assistance:

1. District Assembly ( )
2. Regional Administration ( )
3. State government ( )

26. Have you received help from any NGO?

1. Yes ( )
2. No ( )

If yes, indicate name of NGO \_\_\_\_\_

Indicate type of help: \_\_\_\_\_

27. What economic activity provides the highest source of income or resources for your family or household?

1. Subsistence farming ( )
2. Commercial farming ( )
3. Petty trading ( )
4. Migrant remittances ( )

28. Who contributes the highest economic income to the household?

1. Husband ( )
2. Wife ( )
3. Migrant(s) remittances ( )
4. Other relative(s) \_\_\_\_\_ ( )

29. Who contributes the most resources such as financial capital or labour to support the main livelihoods of the household?

1. Husband ( )
2. Wife ( )
3. Migrant child(ren) ( )
4. Other relatives \_\_\_\_\_ ( )

30. Who is in charge of performing the household chores?

1. Wife ( )
2. Husband ( )
3. Children ( )

31. What other contributions aside from income, do you make to the household?

1. Help with household chores ( )
2. Provide labour on family farm ( )
3. Harvest foodstuffs from the farm ( )
4. The care of old family members ( )
5. Care of children in the family ( )
6. The care of sick family members ( )
7. Repair work and renovations on family house ( )
8. Assistance with family work e.g. funerals ( )

32. What other contributions aside from income, does your spouse make to the household?

1. Help with household chores ( )
2. Provide labour on family farm ( )
3. Harvest foodstuffs from the farm ( )
4. The care of old family members ( )
5. Care of children in the family ( )
6. The care of sick family members ( )
7. Repair work and renovations on family house ( )
8. Assistance with family work e.g. funerals ( )

33. Last year, did you earn enough income from your major economic activity to meet the needs of your family ?

1. Yes ( )
2. No ( )

### C. MIGRATION INFORMATION OF HOUSEHOLD

34. Has any adult migrated from your household into the town/city?

1. Yes ( )
2. No ( )

*[If No, thank respondent and terminate survey. If yes, proceed to next question.]*

35. If yes, how many people from the household have migrated?

1. One person ( )
2. Two people ( )
3. Three people ( )
4. Four persons ( )
5. More than four (indicate number) \_\_\_\_\_

36. What is the sex of migrant(s)?

1. Male (indicate number) \_\_\_\_\_ ( )



2. Female (indicate number) \_\_\_\_\_ ( )

37. What is/are the age brackets of the migrant(s)?

- |          |     |
|----------|-----|
| 1. 15-19 | ( ) |
| 2. 20-30 | ( ) |
| 3. 31-40 | ( ) |
| 4. 41-50 | ( ) |
| 5. 51-60 | ( ) |
| 6. 61-70 | ( ) |

38. What was the migrant's occupation whilst in the village?

- |   |     |
|---|-----|
| 1. Unemployed (uneducated)              | ( ) |
| 2. Unemployed (secondary school leaver) | ( ) |
| 3. Unemployed (trained apprentice)      | ( ) |
| 4. Apprentice in training               | ( ) |
| 5. Student                              | ( ) |
| 6. Farmer                               | ( ) |
| 7. Artisan(s) (indicate) _____          | ( ) |
| 8. Petty trader                         | ( ) |
| 9. Business person                      | ( ) |
| 10. Homemaker                           | ( ) |
| 11. Domestic worker                     | ( ) |
| 12. Labourer                            | ( ) |
| 13. Teacher                             | ( ) |
| 14. Government worker                   | ( ) |
| 15. Clergy                              | ( ) |

39. Which region did he/she/they migrate to?

- |                         |     |
|-------------------------|-----|
| 1. Greater Accra region | ( ) |
| 2. Volta Region         | ( ) |
| 3. Eastern region       | ( ) |
| 4. Central region       | ( ) |
| 5. Western region       | ( ) |
| 6. Northern region      | ( ) |
| 7. Upper East region    | ( ) |
| 8. Upper West region    | ( ) |
| 9. Ashanti region       | ( ) |
| 10. Brong Ahafo region  | ( ) |

40. Which town or city did he/she/they migrate to? \_\_\_\_\_

41. Is he/she employed over there?

- |        |     |
|--------|-----|
| 1. Yes | ( ) |
| 2. No  | ( ) |

42. What occupation is he/she involved in?

- |   |          |
|---|----------|
| 1. Unemployed (uneducated)              | (      ) |
| 2. Unemployed (secondary school leaver) | (      ) |
| 3. Unemployed (trained apprentice)      | (      ) |
| 4. Student                              | (      ) |
| 5. Apprentice in training               | (      ) |
| 5. Farmer                               | (      ) |
| 6. Artisan(s) _____                     | (      ) |
| <hr/>                                   |          |
| 7. Petty trader                         | (      ) |
| 8. Business person                      | (      ) |
| 9. Homemaker                            | (      ) |
| 10. Domestic worker                     | (      ) |
| 11. Labourer                            | (      ) |
| 12. Teacher                             | (      ) |
| 13. Government worker                   | (      ) |
| 14. Clergy                              | (      ) |
| 15. Other (indicate) _____              | (      ) |

43. What was the position of the migrant within the household?

- |  |          |
|--|----------|
| 1. Male head of household              | (      ) |
| 2. Female head of household            | (      ) |
| 3. Male head of family unit            | (      ) |
| 4. Female head of family unit          | (      ) |
| 5. Helper/adviser to head of household | (      ) |
| 6. Dependent children/young adult(s)   | (      ) |

44. Does the migrant still maintain this position within the household?

- |        |          |
|--------|----------|
| 1. Yes | (      ) |
| 2. No  | (      ) |

45. Who now performs the responsibilities of the migrant within the household?

- |                                  |          |
|----------------------------------|----------|
| 1. Spouse                        | (      ) |
| 2. Younger siblings/stepchildren | (      ) |
| 3. Nieces                        | (      ) |
| 4. Nephews                       | (      ) |
| 5. Mother                        | (      ) |
| 6. Father                        | (      ) |
| 7. Auntie                        | (      ) |
| 8. Uncle                         | (      ) |

46. Does the migrant maintain contact with members of the household?

- |        |          |
|--------|----------|
| 1. Yes | (      ) |
| 2. No  | (      ) |

47. How often does he/she return to the village?

1. Once a month (      )
2. Once every two months (      )
3. Two-four times a year (      )
4. Only for special occasions like Easter/Christmas (      )
5. Once a year (      )
6. Rarely/Never (      )

48. Indicate the social/family functions most attended by migrant.

1. None (      )
2. Church services (      )
3. Weddings (      )
4. Funerals (      )
5. Religious celebrations like Easter/Christmas (      )
6. Other (indicate) \_\_\_\_\_

#### **D. EFFECT OF MIGRATION ON DIVISION OF LABOUR AND DECISION-MAKING WITHIN THE HOUSEHOLD**

49. Which activities are viewed as appropriate household activities for women?

1. Fetching water (      )
2. Paying for water (      )
3. Collecting firewood (      )
4. Paying for firewood (      )
5. Cooking (      )
6. Bathing children (      )
7. Caring for sick family members (      )
8. Paying for school fees of children (      )
9. Paying for health care of children (      )
10. Household maintenance (chores, repairs) (      )
11. Clearing new area for farming (      )

50. What do you consider to be appropriate household activities appropriate for men?

1. Fetching water (      )
2. Paying for water (      )
3. Collecting firewood (      )
4. Paying for firewood (      )
5. Cooking (      )
6. Bathing children (      )
7. Caring for sick family members (      )
8. Paying for school fees of children (      )
9. Paying for health care of children (      )
10. Household maintenance (chores, repairs) (      )
11. Clearing new area for farming (      )

51. How much time do you spend daily on each household responsibility?

1. Fetching water \_\_\_\_\_
2. Collecting firewood \_\_\_\_\_
3. Cooking morning meal \_\_\_\_\_
4. Cooking evening meal \_\_\_\_\_
5. Bathing the children \_\_\_\_\_
6. Caring for sick family members \_\_\_\_\_
7. Household maintenance (chores, repairs) \_\_\_\_\_

52. Does anyone help you with your household work?

1. Yes (      )
2. No (      )

53. If yes, indicate your relationship with the person:

1. Daughter (      )
2. Son (      )
3. Niece (      )
4. Nephew (      )
5. Cousin (      )
6. Brother (      )

54. In your opinion, what is the impact of migration on the time that women spend on their household activities responsibilities?

1. Time spent on household responsibilities has increased (      )
2. Time spent on household responsibilities has decreased (      )
3. Time spent on household responsibilities is unchanged (      )

55. How would you describe the relationship between women/men/children within your household before migration?

1. Accommodating (      )
2. Cohesive (      )
3. Divisive (      )
4. Oppressive (      )
5. Other (describe) \_\_\_\_\_

56. Please describe the nature of change in household relationships after migration:

1. Good or cordial relationship (      )
2. It remains accommodating (      )
3. It remains cohesive (      )
4. Decreasing disparities (      )
5. Increasing disparities (      )
6. Other (describe) \_\_\_\_\_

57. Do you think migration has affected social relationships within your household between women/men and children?

1. Yes (      )
2. No (      )

3. Not applicable ( )
58. Describe changes in family relationships due to migration:
- 

59. Has migration affected decision-making in the family?

1. Yes ( )
2. No ( )
3. Don't know ( )

60. Please indicate whose participation in decision-making in your household has increased most since migration:

1. Male head of household ( )
2. Female head of household ( )
3. Male head of family unit ( )
4. Female head of family unit ( )
5. Male relatives ( )
6. Adult migrant(s) ( )
7. No change in participation ( )
8. Other (indicate) \_\_\_\_\_

61. Has migration increased the autonomy or independence of women in your household?

1. Yes ( )
2. No ( )

62. Has migration increased the social status of women within your household?

1. Yes ( )
2. No ( )

63. Do men in your household respect women more as a result of their role after migration?

1. Yes ( )
2. No ( )

## **E. INCOME AND REMITTANCES OF HOUSEHOLDS**

64. Does the migrant remit to the household?

1. Yes ( )
2. No ( )

65. If yes, how often does the migrant remit the household?

1. Once a month ( )
2. Once every two months ( )
3. Every three months ( )

4. Once every six months (      )
5. Once a year (      )
6. Occasionally (      )
7. Not applicable (      )

66. What is the average amount the migrant remits at any give time?

1. 50,000 cedis (      )
2. 100,000 cedis (      )
3. 200,000 cedis (      )
4. 3,00,00-500,000 cedis (      )
5. More than 500,000 cedis (      )

67. Approximately how much does the migrant remit to the household a year?

1. 0 - 1,000,000 cedis (      )
2. 1,000,000 - 2,000,000 cedis (      )
3. 3,000,000 - 5,000,000 cedis (      )
4. 6,000,000 - 10,000,000 cedis (      )

68. Who does the migrant send the remittances to?

1. Male head of household (      )
2. Female head of household (      )
3. Male parent (      )
4. Female parent (      )
5. Spouse (      )
6. Male relatives (      )
7. Other (indicate) \_\_\_\_\_

69. Does the household provide any resources or assistance to the migrant?

1. Yes (      )
2. No (      )

70. If yes, what resources does the household provide to the migrant?

1. Foodstuffs from the farm or market (      )
2. Prepared food items (      )
3. Childcare (      )
4. Money for transportation (return journey) (      )

71. What does your household spend the remittances on?

(rate items according to order of importance for household)

1. Consumption items such as food (      )
2. Clothing (      )
3. School fees for children (      )
4. Health or medical care needs (      )
5. Investment in agriculture (      )
6. Other \_\_\_\_\_

72. What electrical appliance(s) did the household own prior to the migration of a family member?

- |                       |          |
|-----------------------|----------|
| 1. None               | (      ) |
| 2. Fan                | (      ) |
| 3. Iron               | (      ) |
| 4. Radio/wireless set | (      ) |
| 5. Television         | (      ) |
| 6. Fridge             | (      ) |

73. What electrical appliances does the household own as a result of migration or remittances of a migrant?

- |                       |          |
|-----------------------|----------|
| 1. None               | (      ) |
| 2. Fan                | (      ) |
| 3. Iron               | (      ) |
| 4. Radio/wireless set | (      ) |
| 5. Television         | (      ) |
| 6. Fridge             | (      ) |

74. In your opinion has migration improved the economic status of the family?

- |        |          |
|--------|----------|
| 1. Yes | (      ) |
| 2. No  | (      ) |

75. If yes, please explain:

- |   |          |
|---|----------|
| 1. Family is able to meet their basic needs such as adequate food and clothing. | (      ) |
| 2. Family can pay for health care services.                                     | (      ) |
| 3. Family can pay for school fees of children.                                  | (      ) |
| 4. Family upgraded their house.   | (      ) |
| 5. Family can afford a few luxury items.  | (      ) |

76. Has migration enabled your household to achieve some things that they would otherwise not have achieved? Please describe: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

77. In your opinion, has migration increased or decreased the respect that people afford your household (social status) in the village?

- |                        |          |
|------------------------|----------|
| 1. Increased status    | (      ) |
| 2. Decreased status    | (      ) |
| 3. No change in status | (      ) |

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### **EFFECT OF MIGRATION AT THE COMMUNITY LEVEL**

(Ask the head of household to provide general information on households within his/her village, and not on an individual household per se). They should provide examples if possible.

78. In your opinion has migration of people from your village into the cities had any impact on the work that women do in their households?

1. Yes ( )
2. No ( )

79. If yes, please explain:

1. Increase in time spent on household responsibilities and care of family needs ( )
2. Less time spent on household responsibilities and care of family needs due to migration ( )
3. Same time spent on family responsibilities due to help from siblings/relatives ( )

80. In your opinion has migration of people from the village into the cities had any effect on the decision-making of women within households in the village?

1. Yes ( )
2. No ( )

81. If yes, indicate:

1. Increased decision-making for women ( )
2. Decision-making remains the same ( )
3. Decreased decision-making for women ( )

82. Has migration had any impact on farming activities in the village?

1. Yes ( )
2. No ( )

83. If yes, please explain:

1. Decreased time spent on farming ( )
  2. Decreased income from farming ( )
  3. Labour shortage ( )
  4. Lower agricultural productivity ( )
  5. Other: Pls. explain: \_\_\_\_\_
- 

84. Has migration had an impact specifically on the livelihoods of women in the village?

1. Yes ( )



2. No ( )

85. If yes, please explain:

1. Decreased time for livelihoods ( )
  2. Decreased income from livelihoods ( )
  3. More time for livelihoods ( )
  4. More income from livelihoods ( )
  5. Not applicable ( )
  6. Other: Pls. explain: \_\_\_\_\_
- 

86. In your opinion has migration any effect on people at the community level?

7. Yes ( )
8. No ( )

87. If yes, please explain. *(Tick appropriate box. Allow multiple answers)*

9. Loss of able bodied young adults ( )
  10. Shortage of farm labour ( )
  11. Decrease in productive village population ( )
  12. Decrease in agricultural productivity ( )
  13. Increased household responsibilities for women ( )
  14. Unemployed migrants become a social problem ( )
  15. Some migrants never return home ( )
  16. Some migrants never remit their family ( )
  17. Employed migrants provide remittances to family ( )
  18. Families nutritional intake improve ( )
  19. Some migrants gain higher level of education ( )
  20. Some migrants learn new skills ( )
  21. Remittances are inadequate for family needs ( )
  22. Some migrants are able to find employment,  
which is not available in the village ( )
  23. There is reduced financial dependency on parents ( )
  16. Some households enjoy new and higher social ( )
  17. Employed migrants become self sufficient ( )
  18. Employed migrants provide financial assistance  
for community development projects ( )
- 
-

88. Please share with me some suggestions you might have for improving the negative impact (if any), of out-migration on the village: \_\_\_\_\_

89. Please share with me some suggestions you might have for improving the negative consequences of migration (if any), on women: \_\_\_\_\_

90. Please share with me some suggestions you might have for improving the negative consequences of migration (if any), on men: \_\_\_\_\_

Thank you very much for your time.

***(RESEARCHER OR RESEARCH ASSISTANT GIVES PARTICIPANT TWO  
SATCHETS OF YAZZ DETERGENT)***

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## **APPENDIX 3**

### **SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW GUIDE**

#### **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

##### **Identification:**

Name of Researcher or Assistant: .....

Name of Village: .....

House Number of Respondent: .....

Date of Initial Contact: .....

Date of In-depth Interview: .....

Date of Follow-up Meeting: .....

#### **PART 1: HOUSEHOLD BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

1. Household Size.....
2. Adult Females in the Household.....
3. Adult Males in the Household.....
4. Female Children.....
5. Male Children.....
6. Number of migrants from the household.....
7. Gender of migrant.....
8. Age of migrant.....
9. Highest level of education of migrant.....
10. Religious denomination of migrant.....
11. Income-based occupation of migrant.....

#### **PART 2: ATTITUDES CONCERNING GENDER IDEOLOGY, GENDER RELATIONS AND GENDER ROLES**

1. What is expected of you as a man/woman in the community?
2. What is the appropriate behaviour of a husband? A wife? A mother? A son/daughter?
3. What is considered appropriate household activities for women and men?

### **PART 3: PATTERNS OF HOUSEHOLD DECISION- MAKING**

1. What is the spending pattern for your household? Who decides how much money to spend on clothes? School books? Medicine? Food?
2. Who made the final decision to send the children to school?
3. How did your family decide that someone (i.e. spouse, son) should migrate?
4. Who made the final decision concerning migration or non-migration?
5. What factors led your family to decide where this person should migrate to?
6. Who is responsible for making household decisions?
7. Who takes over the family's source of livelihood while the migrant is away?
8. Has migration promoted equality in decision-making between women and men within the household?
9. What are the changes to social relationships within the household as a result of migration?

### **PART 4: DETERMINANTS AND CONSEQUENCES OF MIGRATION**

1. What do you think are the causes of migration from the village?
2. What is the level of migrant contact with the household?
3. Do you receive adequate remittances from migrant to the household?
4. In your opinion has out-migration improved or decreased the economic status of the family?
5. What are the other benefits from migration?
6. What are the other losses from migration?
7. What is the impact of out migration on the role of men within the household?
8. Gender relations: Are there any visible changes in male-female relations within households? At the community level?
9. What are the changes to women's duties in the household as a result of migration?
10. What are the changes to women's livelihoods as a result of migration?
11. What are the most significant indications of change within these communities?
12. Indicate the impact of out-migration on the village community.

### **PART 5: VIEWS AND SUGGESTIONS ON MIGRATION**

1. Do you have any suggestions for improving the negative impact (if any), of out migration on women, men, the household and community.

## **APPENDIX 4**

### **GUIDE TO FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION (FGDs)**

1. Please give me some general information about the village.
2. What do you consider to be the important issues for this community?
3. Which of these issues (or any others) would you say is of specific concern to women/men/children?
4. Have you discussed these issues before? If yes, with whom?
5. Have you received any assistance from an NGO or the government?
6. What is your impression about services and infrastructure in the village?
7. Are they adequate or inadequate? What changes would you like to see?
8. Who do you consider the head of your household?
9. Who makes major decisions at the household level?
10. Who makes major decisions at the community level?
11. Do you have village meetings? What roles do men and women play at such meetings?
12. Do women and men participate equally in making decisions for the village?
13. Is the decision-making process effective in this community?
14. What roles do women, men and children perform in your household?
15. What do you consider men and women's responsibility in the home?
16. How many people have migrated from your household?
17. Do migrants from your visit you? How often and on what occasions?
18. Do migrants send you remittances? How often/how much?
19. What do you usually spend the remittances on?
20. What is your opinion about the migration of people from the community?
21. In your opinion do more males or females migrate?
22. What do you think are reasons people migrate from the village?
23. What are some of the barriers people face in migration?
24. How have they dealt with the situation?
25. Is migration beneficial to households within the community? Give examples.
26. Is migration detrimental to households within the community? Give examples.
27. How does migration affect women within the village:-
  - Women's livelihoods.
  - Social status in the community
  - Decision-making within households.
28. Do you have any other comments on rural-urban migration from the village?

## **APPENDIX 5**

### **GUIDE TO INTERVIEW ABUTIA MIGRANTS IN ACCRA**

#### **Part 1: Personal Background of Migrant**

Name:.....  
 Age:.....  
 Sex:.....  
 Educational Status:.....  
 Employment:.....  
 Marital Status:.....  
 Number of children:.....  
 Name of Abutia village:.....

#### **Part 2: Migrant's Experience**

1. Can you provide me with some general information on the circumstances that motivated you to migrate from Abutia to Accra?
2. What do you think are the reasons that other people are also migrating from the village?
3. So, what would you say is the main reason you moved to Accra?
4. Have you ever lived in any other town or city?
5. Why did you choose Accra and not other city or town in the country?
6. Did you have any relatives and/or friends in Accra prior to moving here?
7. How did you make the decision to move? Did you make it as an individual or together with your family/household members?
8. How long have you lived in the city?
9. Between the time you moved to Accra and now, what have you observed as the trend of migration from Abutia?
10. Do you think women as well as men are migrating from the villages?
11. Are women also members of the association?
12. What roles do they play in the association?
13. Who do you consider as the head of your migrant family in Accra?
14. Are you in contact with your family members in Abutia?
15. Do you visit home regularly? How often in a year?
16. Are you employed in the city?
17. What type of employment do you have?
18. Tell me a little bit about how you got the job.
19. Do you make enough money to take care of your daily expenses?

### **Part 3: Household Division of Labour**

20. What you consider as appropriate gender roles in the household in Abutia?
21. Have these roles changed since you migrated into the city?
22. What specific roles do women actually play in decision-making in the household in Abutia?
23. Are their roles regarding decision-making any different after migrating to Accra?
24. What financial contributions do men and women make to the migrant household?
25. Do children have specific roles in the household in both places?
26. What roles do women play in your association?

### **Part 4: Remittance Behaviour of Migrants**

27. Are you able to send some money to your household members in Abutia?
28. How much are you able to send, and how often do you send it?
29. Do you send it to a specific person?
30. How is the money distributed?
31. What is the money used for?

### **Part 5: Effects of Migration on Households in Abutia**

32. How do you think your migration has affected members of your household in Abutia?
33. Do you think your migration has affected the responsibilities of women in your household in any particularly way?
34. Do you think migration has affected the livelihoods of your household?
35. Could you please tell me which livelihoods are affected, and in which way this occurs.
36. What are some of the benefits that members of your household are enjoying as a result of your migration to Accra?
37. What are the disadvantages to your household members?
38. What would you say are some of the benefits of migration to the villages?
39. What would you consider as disadvantages of migration to the villages?
40. What suggestion do you have for improving the situation of women and children in the villages?
41. What suggestions do you have for improving the conditions in the villages?
42. Has the Abutia Association been able to assist the villages in any way?

